

Mark Twain
in Elmira

SECOND EDITION



*Mark Twain in his Study at Quarry Farm in Elmira, New York, 1880.
Photo courtesy Mark Twain Archive, Elmira College, Elmira, NY.*

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SECOND EDITION

Robert D. Jerome
and Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr.

WITH REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS BY
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Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies
Elmira College
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ELMIRA
COLLEGE

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To all whose contributions have enriched the
Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	ix
Chapter One	Mark Twain in Elmira 1
	Mark Twain's Days in Elmira..... 2
Chapter Two	The Langdon Family 17
	Elmira's Langdon Family..... 19
	The Decline and Fall of the Langdon Home..... 27
Chapter Three	Quarry Farm 35
	From <i>My Father, Mark Twain</i> 39
	My Uncle, Mark Twain..... 45
Chapter Four	Lectures in Elmira 61
	The American Vandal 64
	General Hawley's Meeting..... 65
	Twain and Cable 68
	Mark Twain's Last Visit to Elmira..... 70
Chapter Five	Monument to Adam 74
	A Monument to Adam..... 75
	The Adam Monument Petition..... 77
	Identification of Petition Signers 79
Chapter Six	Friends and Visitors 84
	Charlie Klapproth's Cafe:
	Mark Twain Sipped Here 85
	Katy Leary's Story..... 88
	Rudyard Kipling's Account 93
	Mark Twain's Account of Kipling's Visit..... 103
	Katy Leary's Comments 105
	To Rudyard Kipling, In England..... 106
Chapter Seven	Park Church and Thomas K. Beecher 107
	Mr. Beecher and the Clergy..... 108
	A New Beecher Church..... 113
	Mark Twain's Elmira 119

Chapter Eight	Woodlawn Cemetery	143
	Jervis Langdon’s Diary	148
	Account of the Funeral	150
	Langdon-Clemens Plot in Woodlawn Cemetery	155
	Gabrilowitsch—Buried at Mark Twain’s Feet	165
Chapter Nine	Anecdotes	173
Appendix A	An Abridged Chronology of Mark Twain in Elmira	192
Appendix B	Samuel Langhorne Clemens	197
Appendix C	Mark Twain and Elmira	221
Appendix D	Langdon Family	225
Chapter Ten	Quarry Farm A Country Residence	228
	How Mark Twain Travelled Between Hartford & Elmira.....	228
	Renovations at Quarry Farm.....	231
	Quarry Farm A Study of the “Picturesque”	234
Chapter Eleven	Mark Twain’s Elmira Circle	262
	Theodore Crane	262
	Katie Leary.....	270
	Auntie Cord.....	275
	John T. Lewis	281
	Ernest Koppe	288
	Cats at Quarry Farm.....	292
	Susan and Theodore Crane	301
Chapter Twelve	Sam and Olivia 1870-1872	349
	Mark Twain’s 115th Wedding Anniversary	349
	The Wedding of Mark Twain.....	350
	The Tragic Story of Emma Nye.....	352
	“He Was So Rarely Beautiful”: Langdon Clemens	356

Introduction to the First Edition

Mark Twain is probably claimed by more places than any other American man of letters. Hannibal and Hartford both consider him their own. Hawaii, San Francisco, Virginia City, Buffalo and many other places both at home and abroad all publicize their association with the famous author and humorist. Perhaps the least recognized of all the places that influenced the life of Samuel Langhorne Clemens was the most important, both in his family life and in providing the environment in which he accomplished some of his best writing. Elmira, New York, was the scene of some of the happiest moments of his life and of some of the saddest. Here he courted and married his beloved Livy, beginning one of the great love stories in American literature. Here were buried the people he loved most: Olivia Langdon Clemens, his wife for thirty-four years; his first-born child and only son; the two beloved daughters who preceded him in death and the only daughter to survive him. Here, at last, he too was laid to rest.

Elmira, for Mark Twain, meant many happy summers with his family at Quarry Farm and some of his most productive periods of writing. In the octagonal study on East Hill, built by his sister-in-law to give him privacy, he wrote parts of some of his most famous works, as well as many articles and essays. From his first visit in 1868 until his burial in Woodlawn Cemetery in 1910, Elmira played a central role in Mark Twain's private and professional life. It is the purpose of this book to present for the first time in one place a collection of the information about Mark Twain's association with Elmira.

The search for references to Elmira has taken the editors to Mark Twain's own works and letters, to the memoirs of those who knew him, and to many of the numerous books and articles written about him. Our intention, however, was not to reprint material in easily available sources, but to provide a wider audience for less familiar information that previously has had only a limited or local circulation. In this category are articles from the journal of the Chemung County Historical Society, news stories and notices from the Elmira newspapers, privately printed material, and anecdotes and stories that have circulated orally in the community. The items we have selected have been reprinted verbatim in most instances. Editorial notes, indicated by brackets, have been given only to correct errors in fact or to update information. We recognize that a certain amount of repetition results from the fact that authors of different selections sometimes describe the same event or episode, but

we hope that the value of preserving the integrity of the original material will outweigh the sacrifice in readability. The illustrations, many of which have not appeared in print before, were selected to show Elmira scenes familiar to Mark Twain and to picture the author and his family in various Elmira locations.

Many places in Elmira associated with Mark Twain have disappeared with the years. The Langdon home in which he was married is now the site of a shopping center. The Rathbun Hotel where he played billiards, and Klapproth's Saloon where he had a drink or two, fell to downtown development. Doctors Silas O. and Rachel Brooks Gleason's Elmira Water Cure that Mark Twain passed on his way up East Hill to Quarry Farm disappeared many decades ago. But many sites remain. Quarry Farm itself, has changed through the years with renovations and additions, but still has the same view across the City of Elmira and the Chemung Valley to the hills of Pennsylvania in the distance. The octagonal study was moved to the campus of Elmira College where it is both better protected and more accessible to visitors. Park Church, across the street from the Langdon home[site], has survived two floods and still plays an active role in the religious life of the community. The location of Mark Twain's grave and those of the rest of his family in Elmira's Woodlawn Cemetery is a place of pilgrimages for many visitors each year.

The Mark Twain Society of Elmira, sponsor of the early editions of this book, was founded in 1975 to serve as a focal point for local interest in Elmira's most important adopted citizen. Elmira College has a special collection of books and other materials by and about Mark Twain. The collection includes many first editions, foreign language translations, some letters and manuscripts, and a number of photographs. The Chemung County Historical Society has a special room devoted to Mark Twain material, including some furniture, photographs, and other personal objects. Public recognition of the author's association with Elmira, for a long time confined to commercial enterprises such as the Mark Twain Hotel and the Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn Motels, resulted in the dedication of the Mark Twain Riverfront Park in 1976 and the decision to give the name Samuel L. Clemens Performing Arts Center to a newly developed community cultural center.

The editors are grateful to the many individuals and institutions whose helpful cooperation and assistance was essential in completing the book. The first printing of the book was made possible by a grant from the Kiwanis Club of Elmira. Special appreciation is due to the Chemung

County Historical Society for the use of its collection and for permission to reprint several articles from the *Chemung Historical Journal*, to Elmira College for the use of the Mark Twain Collection in the Gannett-Tripp Learning Center, and to Jervis Langdon, Jr. for making available portions of the unpublished diary of his father, Jervis Langdon. The *Elmira Star-Gazette*, the Park Church, and the Steele Memorial Library of Elmira, and the Mark Twain Memorial and the Nook Farm Research Library of Hartford, Connecticut were especially helpful. Among the many persons who contributed to the success of the book include Thomas E. Byrne, Yvette Eastman, Daisy L. Elliott, Louise Freed, Mary T. Heller, Robert Heller, Jervis Langdon, Robert Lester, James Lewis, John D. McGuire, Mary Metzger, John Murphy, Donna Roberts, Eva Taylor, Edward L. Updegraff, and Otilie Erikson Wilson.

Robert D. Jerome
Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr.
Elmira, New York, 1977

Note for the Fourth Printing

This volume has had a steady sale since its first publication, and Elmira has come to be recognized as one of the significant places in the life of Mark Twain. Additional information about Mark Twain's association with Elmira continues to come to light and is being published in the *Mark Twain Society Bulletin*, a biannual publication begun in 1978. On December 31, 1983, Jervis Langdon, Jr. gave Quarry Farm to Elmira College and the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Quarry Farm was established. Quarry Farm and its library, together with the other Elmira College collections have increased the importance of Elmira to Mark Twain scholars. Although a major revision of this book might be appropriate, the Mark Twain Society feels that it is important that the book not go out of print. It was decided to reprint it with only minor corrections in order to have copies available for the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Mark Twain's birth.

R.D.J. and H.A.W. Jr.
March, 1985

Introduction to the Second Edition

In this sesquicentennial year commemorating the creation of the pen-name, *Mark Twain*, the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies is pleased to publish the Second Edition of *Mark Twain in Elmira*. This edition includes all content from the previous edition. It also offers a collection of new pieces selected by Dr. Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr. and Robert D. Jerome for inclusion in a future edition. These additional essays are contained in Chapters Ten through Twelve; most of them were published previously in the *Mark Twain Society Bulletin*. Gratitude is extended posthumously to both men for their foresight in assembling a list of items they deemed worthy of publication in a future edition of the volume they first compiled in 1977. In addition to Jerome and Wisbey's suggested essays, organizational changes have been made to the earlier edition as well as new photo sections and other relevant pieces added.

Many people helped make this Second Edition possible. Nina Skinner typed the First Edition into Word. Christy Gray assisted in the preparation of new essays and, with her son, Keenan Gray, helped to compile the Index; her belief in this Second Edition has been inspirational. Many new photographs by Ann Cady enhance this edition along with archival images provided by Mark Woodhouse from the Elmira College Mark Twain Archive. Dan Baroody designed the cover. Carrie Geer prepared the final file for production; her precision, enthusiasm, and support of this project has been invaluable. Gary Scharnhorst offered essential editorial advice.

This Second Edition of *Mark Twain in Elmira* is made possible by the generous support of:

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It is an honor to again make available the work of Robert D. Jerome and Dr. Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr.

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August 2013

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Chapter One

Mark Twain in Elmira

When Mark Twain first visited Elmira in 1868, he found a small, upstate New York city of some 15,000 people, pleasantly situated on both sides of the Chemung River, surrounded by small hills. An impressive set of county buildings and an abundance of lawyers testified to its designation as the county seat of Chemung County. Wide, tree-lined streets and spacious Greek Revival and Victorian Gothic homes, a regional shopping center, and the home of a variety of small, diversified industries all indicated the prosperity of the community. Elmira was a major transportation center containing busy yards and car shops of the Erie and Northern Central railroads, a factor in the location here, during the Civil War, of a large prison camp. The Chemung Canal (not to be closed until 1878) ran through the center of the city, carrying barges of coal from the mines of Pennsylvania to Seneca Lake connecting with the Erie Canal system.

Culturally, Elmira was the home of Elmira Female College, founded in 1855 as the first college for women offering degrees comparable to those earned at colleges for men. Within a decade of Mark Twain's first visit, Elmira also became the home of the Elmira Reformatory, a pioneering experiment in penology, that brought Zebulon R. Brockway to the city. The Reverend Thomas K. Beecher was another outstanding person who made his home in Elmira. Not only was he the minister of the Park Church, but he was president of the Elmira Academy of Sciences and leader of many civic enterprises. Both men provided congenial companionship for Mark Twain in the years ahead. Sixteen churches of various denominations reflected the religious and ethnic diversity of the community.

Additionally, Elmira was known to many as the home of the Elmira Water Cure and the innovative work of Doctors Silas O. and Rachel Brooks Gleason. A spacious new Opera House attracted the nation's leading performers to the city where they could have their choice of twenty hotels or more than twice that number of saloons. Two daily and two weekly newspapers kept Elmirans informed of news from home and abroad.

In the forty-two years from Mark Twain's first visit until his death, Elmira more than doubled its population, consolidating its position as a regional cultural and business center. For nearly two years of courtship, Mark Twain visited Elmira as frequently as he could. After his marriage in 1870, the Clemens family visited Elmira for some part, usually the summer months, of each

year except one, until 1889. The death of family loved ones—Theodore Crane in 1889 and Mrs. Clemens's mother in 1890; the changing interests of the Clemens children as they grew up; and the family's financial difficulties that resulted in a sojourn abroad, eventually reduced the visits to Elmira to two more summers (1895 and 1903) and a few short trips. The months that Mark Twain spent in Elmira, however, were among his most pleasant and productive. Major parts of his best known and happiest books, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, and others, were written in the octagonal study at Quarry Farm. The darker works of his later years were written elsewhere.

Mark Twain's Days in Elmira

by Rufus Rockwell and Otilie Erickson Wilson

A general introduction to the subject of Mark Twain in Elmira is provided in the writings of Rufus Rockwell Wilson (1865-1949). Born in Troy, Pennsylvania, Wilson came to Elmira as a young man to work for the Elmira Telegram. In 1889, when Rudyard Kipling came to Elmira to see Mark Twain, Wilson was the cub reporter who showed Kipling his way to Quarry Farm. Throughout a long career as newspaper writer, editor, author, and publisher, Wilson never forgot that episode nor the sight of Mark Twain on the streets of Elmira. When he and his wife returned to Elmira in 1937, they continued publishing books under the name of the Primavera Press. Wilson's studies about Lincoln won him national recognition as a Lincoln scholar and an honorary degree from Lincoln Memorial University. He died in Elmira in 1949.

"Mark Twain's Days in Elmira" is the last chapter of New York in Literature by Rufus Rockwell Wilson and Otilie Erikson Wilson (Elmira, N.Y.: Primavera Press, 1947), pp. 336-350. It is reprinted here with the permission of Mrs. Otilie Erikson Wilson.

It was on a late afternoon in August, 1868, that young Charles Langdon with one of his chums to keep him company, journeyed to Waverly, a pleasant town on the line of the Erie railway midway between Owego and Elmira, where he planned to meet his new friend, Sam Clemens, westward bound from New York for a first visit to the city which, by Destiny's planning, was to play so large a part in his after life. Clem-

ens, soon to become best known by his pen name Mark Twain, was then three months short of thirty-three, and already had behind him his days as wandering printer and Mississippi River pilot, and as prospector, miner, newspaper reporter and budding lecturer in Nevada and California.

Late in 1866 Clemens came east intent on a trip around the world, in the course of which it had been arranged he should send letters to the *Alta California* of San Francisco. However, in April, 1867, while on a visit to his mother and sister in St. Louis, he read an announcement of the excursion the steamer *Quaker City* sailing from New York soon was to make to the Holy Land. Fired by this new prospect, he gave up the longer journey he had planned, and, with the financial support promptly pledged by the owners of the *Alta California*, enrolled as a member of “the refined party that was to sail for a long summer journey to the most romantic of all lands and seas, the shores of the Mediterranean.” There were sixty-seven in the party when the *Quaker City* left New York on June 8, 1867, and what they saw and did Clemens recorded in three score letters to the *Alta California* and the New York *Tribune* which later gathered into a book entitled *The Innocents Abroad* were to make their author the most famous humorist of his time.

Not least among the voyagers on the *Quaker City* as the sequel proved was Charles Langdon, the eighteen-year-old son of Jervis Langdon, a wealthy coal dealer and mine owner of Elmira. Despite the difference in their ages a friendship quickly developed between Clemens and Langdon. The latter had two sisters at home, and of Olivia, the younger, a lovely girl, he had brought with him a miniature done on ivory. On a fateful September day in the beautiful Bay of Smyrna, Clemens, lounging in Langdon’s cabin, was shown this portrait. He studied it with manifest admiration, and each time he came after that he asked to see the picture. He had fallen in love with a face, and “as long as he lived he never saw another woman.”

The *Quaker City* returned to New York on November 19, 1867, and four weeks later there was a lively reunion of some of the party at the New York home of one of them. Clemens had a part in this reunion and so did young Charles Langdon. More important to the purposes of the present record two days before Christmas Clemens was invited to dine at their hotel with Langdon’s father and sister who were passing the holiday season in the city. And at this dinner Clemens met his future wife for the first time. Olivia Langdon was then twenty-two years of age, and had lately recovered from a long period of invalidism, the result of a

fall on the ice. Gentle, winning and lovable, the heart of the man from the West was in her keeping from the first moment of their meeting. The young couple saw much of each other during the next few days, and when they parted it was with an invitation from the father and son, for Clemens to visit Elmira in the early future—an invitation which had prompt acceptance.

There unexpectedly intervened, however, need for a business trip to the Pacific Coast, and Clemens did not see Elmira for the better part of a year. When at last he was able to make the journey, he took by mistake a slow train instead of a fast one, and it was a series of telegrams announcing his belated progress that on that August afternoon in 1868 moved young Langdon to go down the line as far as Waverly to meet him. When the New York train arrived Langdon and his chum found Clemens in the smoking-car, clad in nondescript fashion, for the humorist had not yet acquired the neatness of dress which was habitual with him in his later years, and also somewhat the worse for wear at the end of long hours of travel on a hot summer day. The greeting given Clemens was a cordial one, but was followed by a hesitant inquiry as to whether or not he had brought with him other clothes than those he was wearing.

“Oh yes,” was the cheerful reply. “I have a fine new outfit in this bag, all but a hat. I won’t see anyone tonight, for it will be late when we get in, and in the morning we’ll go out early and get a hat.”

True to promise the guest appeared at daylight correctly clad, and an early trip to the nearest haberdasher secured the needed hat. There followed three gay and happy weeks in the stately Langdon home which stood until late in 1939 at the corner of Main and Church Streets in Elmira. Before they were ended Clemens was more than ever alive to the fact that there was only one woman in the world for him. At the outset, however, his courtship was not in all ways a smooth one. Olivia Langdon was not easily won, and, while her brother found much to admire in his friend from the West, he could not see him as the life companion of his adored and precious sister. On the other hand and from the first Jarvis Langdon had faith in the essential manliness of his daughter’s suitor, and, after other visits and the inquiries it behooved a careful father to make, on February 4, 1869, gave his approval to a formal engagement. Olivia’s mother and elder sister, aware that she now knew her own mind, seconded this approval, and so did the latter’s husband, Theodore Crane, who, long before had read Mark Twain’s sketches and now endorsed him without reserve.

The happy lover hastened to pass the glad news on to his mother. “She is only a little body,” he wrote from Elmira, “but she hasn’t her peer in Christendom. I gave her only a plain gold engagement ring, when fashion imperatively demands a two-hundred dollar diamond one, and told her it was typical of her future life—namely that she would have to flourish on substance, rather than luxuries (but you see I knew the girl—she don’t care anything about luxuries)... She spends no money but her usual year’s allowance; spends nearly every cent of that on other people. She will be a good sensible little wife, without any airs about her. I don’t make intercession for her beforehand, and ask you to love her, for there isn’t any use in that—you couldn’t help it if you were to try. I warn you that whoever come within the fatal influence of her beautiful nature is her willing slave forevermore.”

A few days after the return of the *Quaker City* Clemens received from Elisha Bliss, Jr., the shrewd and enterprising head of a subscription book concern at Hartford, a proposition to publish a volume of the letters he had written in the course of that good ship’s voyage. In due time an understanding was reached by author and publisher, and in the spare hours of a trip to the Pacific Coast already referred to and of a successful and profitable lecture tour in the fall and winter of 1868-69, the manuscript was made ready for the printer. At the suggestion of Bliss it was given the title of *The Innocents Abroad, or The New Pilgrim’s Progress*. The lecture tour closed in March, and the lecturer, abandoning a proposed spring tour to California in order to be with his future wife, went at once to Elmira.

There the final proofs of his book came to him, and in the Langdon home he and Olivia read them together, she with an instinctive sense for what was fine and true that was to make her until her death her husband’s keenest and most helpful critic. In more ways than one Sam Clemens was still a diamond in the rough, and the processes to which he now submitted were salutary as well as gentle ones. Nor was proof-reading the major concern of those April and May days. “I feel ashamed of myself,” Clemens wrote his mother, “and yet I have had really no inclination to do anything but court Livy. I haven’t any other inclination yet.”

And so, in a beguiling alternation of work and play, the big book was at last completed and in July, 1869, published in a first edition of 20,000 copies, which was but a harbinger of the immediate and long continued favor to be won by what perhaps remains the greatest book of travel ever written by an American. Not yet, however, was its author

convinced that he could safely count on his writings as his sole or main means of support. Instead, with the aid of his future wife's father he purchased a third interest in *The Express* of Buffalo, and in the late summer of 1869 began his labors as one of its editors, making time also for frequent week-ends in Elmira, and for occasional lecture tours. On February 2, 1870, in the presence of five score guests Samuel Clemens and Olivia Langdon were married in the parlors of the Langdon home in Elmira—stately rooms which in future years were to witness so much of primal joy and sorrow for both husband and wife. A source of delight at the moment was the receipt by Clemens on his wedding-day of a check from his publishers for upward of \$4,000, royalty from the sales in recent months of *The Innocents Abroad*, nearly 100,000 copies of which were sold before the end of the third year.

The day after their wedding the young couple set out for Buffalo to take up their residence in a house which, to the husband's bewildered and pleased surprise, the bride's father had purchased and furnished for them. But their days in Buffalo were to prove brief and troubled ones. Jervis Langdon fell ill in May, and in the following month, his condition having become critical, Clemens and his wife were summoned to Elmira to join in the work of caring for him until the end came in August. Then a baby boy, Langdon Clemens, was born prematurely in November, and there followed months of invalidism for the mother. Sickness and loss gave the husband a distaste for his Buffalo surroundings, and as soon as he could he found a buyer at a sacrifice for his interest in *The Express*, placed on sale the house Jervis Langdon had bought for him and his wife, and in April, 1871, they left Buffalo and their home, never to return to them.

During the previous summer while Jervis Langdon lay dying, Bliss, the publisher, had visited Elmira and contracted with Clemens to write a book dealing with his western experiences. In Elmira, on July 15, 1870, work was begun on what was to prove one of its author's masterpieces, but for a time, owing to distracting conditions, little progress was made on it. Early in May, 1871, their Buffalo days behind them and his wife and baby finally able to travel, Clemens took them to Elmira and to Quarry Farm, for the first of what was to prove many restful and fruitful summers in rarely beautiful surroundings. Quarry Farm, then the home of Mrs. Theodore Crane, the sister of Mrs. Clemens, is a hilltop house overlooking Elmira and the Chemung River with a lovely vista of distant hills. Mr. and Mrs. Jervis Langdon found and fell in love with it in the

course of an evening drive, and the husband made haste to purchase it as a summer retreat for his family and kinfolk. There was an abandoned quarry a little way up the hill from the house, and at the suggestion of Thomas K. Beecher, then best beloved of Elmira ministers, the place became and remains Quarry Farm.

Mother and baby showed early improvement at Quarry Farm, and with ease of mind the husband, with fresh zeal, resumed work on the manuscript he had begun and laid aside the previous year. "I am writing with a red-hot interest," ran a letter to Bliss before the end of May. "Nothing grieves me now, nothing bothers me or gets my attention. I don't think of anything but the book, and I don't have an hour's unhappiness about anything and don't care two cents whether school keeps or not. It will be a bully book. I have twelve hundred pages of manuscript already written, and am now writing two hundred a week—more than that in fact; during the past week wrote twenty-three one day, then thirty, thirty-three, thirty-five, fifty-two, and sixty-five. How's that?" The title finally given it was *Roughing It*, and when it appeared early in 1872 it sold abundantly, widening and confirming the fame of its author as a humorist and as an unsurpassed chronicler of the life he had known in remote places.

In October, 1871, in order to be near his publisher, Clemens arranged for a residence in Hartford, which at first regarded as temporary soon became a permanent one. But the family did not lose its touch with Elmira. On March 19, 1872, in the old Langdon home, a second child, a little girl whom they named Olivia Susan, was born to them. A few weeks later, little Langdon, who had been from the first a delicate child, died in the new home in Hartford, and was laid to rest in the burial plot of the Langdons in Woodlawn Cemetery, Elmira. The blow was a heavy one for the mother, and, with seaside sojourns and a long stay in England and Scotland in 1873, it was not until early May of 1874 that the family came again to Quarry Farm.

The summer that followed was an eventful one. A new baby, a second girl, was born in June, and on the hillside near the old quarry Mrs. Crane built a study for Mark Twain, still standing after more than three and seventy years, [Editor's Note: Moved to Elmira College Campus in 1952.] where, free from interruptions of every sort, he began *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and completed the dramatization of *The Gilded Age*, the novel he had written in 1873 in collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner. "It is the loveliest study you ever saw," he reported to his

Hartford friend, Joseph Twichell. "It is...a cosy nest, and just room in it for a sofa, table and three or four chairs, and when the storm sweeps down the remote valley, and the lightning flashes behind the hills beyond, and the rain beats on the roof over my head, imagine the luxury of it." A later letter to Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh adds a few details to this picture. "The study," he tells his Scotch friend, "is built on top of a tumbled rock-heap that has morning-glories climbing about it and a stone stairway leading down through and dividing it. On hot days I spread the study door wide open, anchor my papers down with brickbats and write in the midst of the hurricanes, clothed in the same thin linen we make shirts of."

Some days in this secluded nook Mark Twain put on paper as much as fifty pages of the manuscript of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. There were other days when he did not work at all, but, their portable hammocks placed side by side on the lawn, with his brother-in-law, Theodore Crane, read and discussed favorite books through lazy summer afternoons. These included *Two Years Before the Mast*, *The Mutineers of the Bounty*, and *Pepys Diary*, volumes Mark Twain was sure to call for and reread on each return to Quarry Farm. To anticipate the issue of Mark Twain's labors in the summer of 1874: He finished *Tom Sawyer* at Hartford in July, 1875—the family did not go that summer to Quarry Farm—and it was published in December, 1876, to at once take and hold first place among American stories of boy life. The play which he made from *The Gilded Age* was given in Hartford in January, 1875, with John T. Raymond in the role of Colonel Sellers, and for a long period yielded golden returns to authors and actor.

Another product of the summer of 1874 demands a word. Auntie Cord, the colored cook at Quarry Farm, was a Virginian negress who took pride in the fact that in her youth she had been twice sold as a slave. In the long ago a barbarous system had parted her from all her children, but at sixty she was rotund and jolly and plainly without a care in the world. She had told the strange story of her life to Mrs. Crane, and the latter in turn had passed it on to her sister's husband. One evening, with the family gathered on the front veranda in the moonlight, Auntie Cord paused to say goodnight. A tactful question or two won her confidence, and a moment later she was seated at Mark Twain's feet repeating the story she had told Mrs. Crane.

The author wrote it out next morning in thought and idiom exactly as she had told it to him and under the title "A True Story, Re-

peated Word for Word as I Heard It.” The article was published in the November, 1874, issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*—Mark Twain’s first contribution to that magazine. It is now included in *Sketches New and Old*, and the latter-day reader who comes upon it there will vote it a rare and fine example of its author’s gift of transcription and portrayal. William Dean Howells, then editor of the *Atlantic*, described it as “one of those noble pieces of humanity with which the South has...atoned for all its despite to the negro,” and few there are who will deny Auntie Cord’s story a place among minor masterpieces.

The summer of 1876 was another happy period for the Clemens family again at Quarry Farm, where they had gone, ran a letter to Dr. John Brown, to be “hermits that eschew caves and live in the sun.” For Mark Twain the season was one of steady industry, and before its end he had written several hundred pages of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, designed as a sequel to *Tom Sawyer*. It was at this time also that, borrowing the manner and methods of his favorite Pepys, he wrote the sketch to which he later gave the title *1601*. Another minor masterpiece, this rollicking and wholly frank report of an imaginary conversation at the court of Queen Elizabeth will not be found in its author’s collected works, but it is better than Rabelais and in some future time, for men change and tastes change with them—may find a welcome from those who now read *The Decameron* and *Droll Tales* without a qualm.

In the course of his reading at Quarry Farm in the summer of 1877 Mark Twain came upon and conned with delight an English tale of the thirteenth century written by Charlotte M. Yonge and entitled *The Prince and the Page*. The story of a submerged personality there set forth fired Mark Twain’s fancy, and during the summer he wrote some four hundred manuscript pages of the tale later published as *The Prince and the Pauper*. Then he laid it aside until a new period of inspiration should come to him.

The summer of 1877 at Quarry Farm had one tense quarter hour in which John Lewis, colored man-of-all-work, played a hero’s part. Mark Twain told the story at length in letters to Dr. John Brown and William Dean Howells. The young wife of Charles Langdon with her little daughter Julia and the latter’s nursemaid, were in a buggy and their runaway horse was speeding down East Hill toward Elmira and what seemed fatal disaster, when Lewis, homeward bound with a loaded wagon, discovered their plight. He turned his team across the road and leaping from his

seat seized the bridle of the frightened horse and “mighty of frame and muscle,” brought it to a standstill.

When the Clemens and Crane families, who had seen the alarming start from the farm gate, arrived on the scene with fear in their hearts they found that no harm had befallen the supposed victims. Lewis was promptly rewarded for his bravery. He was given fifteen hundred dollars in money and a variety of presents. Most important of these in the hero’s estimation was an inscribed stem-winding gold watch, splendid and welcome fulfillment of his long cherished desire to own a silver timepiece “costing at least thirty dollars.” Lewis lived on at Quarry Farm for nearly thirty years, his old age, when he was no longer able to work, made one of peace and comfort by a monthly pension to which Mark Twain and Henry H. Rogers were contributors.

The Clemens family sailed early in April, 1878, for the sojourn in Europe which was to furnish material for *A Tramp Abroad*. When they returned in the first days of September, 1879, they went at once to Quarry Farm, where at his accustomed study-table Mark Twain resumed with renewed interest work on the manuscript of this book which he had begun in Paris. Both husband and wife were weary of travel and glad to be back at Quarry Farm. Twichell of Hartford for six weeks had shared Mark Twain’s tramps of the previous year through the Black Forest and other parts of Europe. “You have run about a good deal, Joe,” Clemens now wrote him, “but you have never seen any place that was so divine as the farm. Why don’t you come here and take a foretaste of heaven?”

In March, 1880, *A Tramp Abroad*, which Mark Twain had finished in Hartford early in January, came from the press and was received by the reviewers as a singular blending of its author’s best and—worst. But Howells praised it without reserve, and the right word from that friend was always food and drink to Clemens. At Elmira in July, 1880, a third daughter was born to the author and his wife, a robust example of babyhood whom they named Jane Lampton in honor of her grandmother, but who was always called Jean. That summer Mark Twain worked by turns on *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Prince and the Pauper*. The latter, which he brought to an end on September 15, was published in December of the following year, dedicated to the author’s daughters, Susy and Clara. It contained some of his best writing, and through the years has won and held the favor of young and old.

The stay at Quarry Farm in the summer of 1881 was a long one. The early part of the summer of 1882 Mark Twain devoted to a trip to

his old haunts on the Mississippi. In the opening months of 1875 the *Atlantic Monthly* had published seven articles dealing in a masterly way with his experiences as a pilot. These he now decided with added material to expand into a volume, but first there was need for a freshening of old memories by trips down the river to New Orleans and up the river to St. Paul. These journeys were duly accomplished, with a halt of three days at his native Hannibal. Then he posted eastward to Quarry Farm, where he began work on the book that was to be called *Life on the Mississippi*. He finished it at Hartford before the end of the year and it was published in May, 1883 to at once take its place, by reason particularly of its masterly first chapters, as one of the finest of his many books.

A month later the Clemens family were again at Quarry Farm, and, rereading the first chapters of a manuscript long on the stocks, Mark Twain found his inspiration renewed, and set out to work with fresh zeal on *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. "I haven't piled up manuscript so in years," he wrote Howells late in July, "as I have done since we came here to the farm three weeks and a half ago. I wrote four thousand words today and I touch three thousand and upward pretty often, and don't fall below twenty-six hundred any working day. And when I get fagged out, I lie abed a couple of days and read and smoke, and then go it again for six or seven days." The book "I half-finished two or three years ago I expect to complete in a month or ... two months more. And I shall like it whether anybody else does or not."

In this instance Mark Twain had good reason to be proud of the child of his fancy. When, after long labor with the proofs in the summer of 1884, a labor in which Mrs. Clemens with careful regard for the conventions took a critical and by no means minor part, *Huckleberry Finn* came from the press in the last days of that year it was accepted on the instant as a worthy sequel to *Tom Sawyer* and its ragged and homeless yet care-free hero as one of the immortal lads of fiction. It was published, it should be noted in passing, by the firm Mark Twain had established in association with Charles L. Webster, who had married the daughter of his sister Pamela, and which shortly was to win immense prestige as publishers of the *Memoirs of General Grant*.

The summer of 1885 at Quarry Farm, to which the Clemens family came at the end of June, was for Mark Twain one of anxious thought for the success of these *Memoirs* which the slowly dying author was bringing to a painful conclusion at Mount McGregor. A day or two after his arrival at Quarry Farm, he was summoned to Mount McGregor

by General Grant, and was able to carry with him the cheering news that there were already in hand advance orders for upward of one hundred thousand sets of the *Memoirs*. General Grant died on July 23, and on February 27, 1886, a little more than seven months later, Charles L. Webster & Company handed his widow a check for two hundred thousand dollars, up to that time the largest single royalty check in history. Later checks made up a total of four hundred and forty thousand dollars paid to Mrs. Grant.

The summers of 1886 and 1887 at Quarry Farm do not seem to have been attended by labor on any of Mark Twain's major books, [Editors' Note: "In the summer of 1886 he began *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (at Quarry Farm), and after a busy but unproductive winter in Hartford... Mark returned the next season to Quarry Farm and again fell to work upon the *Yankee* ... From the hilltop he wrote ... 'But I have to lose the present week, in New York & Hartford, on business. If I could buy said week, and remain at work here, I could afford to pay \$3,000 for it.'" Dixon Wecter, Editor. *The Love Letters of Mark Twain*, pp. 248-249. He continued working on *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* in 1887.] but during the summer of 1888 he took up and worked with fresh inspiration and energy on a story he had begun a few years before after a reading of a copy of Malory given him by George W. Cable—*A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court*. "As I read those quaint and curious legends," he recalled at a later time, "I naturally contrasted those days with ours, and it made me curious to fancy what might be the result if we could dump the nineteenth century down into the sixth century and observe the consequences." His attempt to do this was now attended by tart expression of his unrelenting hatred of abuses and inequalities pardoned by time; and the book when published in 1889, with apt illustrations by Daniel Carter Beard, gave grave and lasting offense in England; but Mark Twain never did more delightful writing than in the opening pages of *A Connecticut Yankee*, and present readers find it what its author intended it should be—a stern protest against injustice and man's inhumanity to his fellows.

In the summer of 1888 one of the present writers was a youthful reporter in Elmira and an indelible memory of that now faraway time attaches to the occasional appearances of Mark Twain in the streets of the town, clad usually in white and revealing beneath a wide brimmed hat of straw a shock of iron-gray hair soon to become not unlike a silver crown—an unmistakable and unforgettable figure. A second and pleas-

ant memory of those distant times has to do with advice and help given to another reporter, who, travelling from India to England by way of the United States in the summer of 1889, halted at Elmira in quest of the interview with Mark Twain he desired to procure for his Allahabad newspaper.

Twenty-four-year-old Rudyard Kipling was then unknown outside of a narrow circle, but in no long time was to claim attention as a star of the first magnitude in the literary firmament. A mid-morning call at the office of *The Telegram*, and a drive to Quarry Farm disclosed the fact that Mark Twain was at the home of Charles Langdon in the city. Thus on an early August afternoon the Langdon homestead became the first meeting-place of the two most widely known authors of their period. Both later recorded characteristic accounts of this contact of kindred spirits and the birth of a friendship which was to end only with the death of the elder man. "I am not a lover of all poetry," Mark Twain more than once declared in after years; "but there is something in Kipling that appeals to me. I guess he is about my level."

Theodore Crane, friend and beloved comrade of Mark Twain, after long illness died at Quarry Farm in July, 1889. Late in the following year the mothers of both Mr. and Mrs. Clemens passed from life—the one at Keokuk, Iowa, at the ripe age of eighty-seven, and the other at Elmira in the home which for more than half a century she had helped to make a center of gracious and beautiful living. Grave presages these of the tragic part death was thereafter and in ever increasing measure to play in the life of Mark Twain. The Clemens family did not spend the summer of 1890 at Quarry Farm, but instead, as related in an earlier chapter, took for the season a cottage at the Onteora Club at Tannersville in the Catskills.

There followed a period of anxiety and trial for the Clemens family. Ill-starred investments in the development of a type-setting machine which had enlisted Mark Twain's interest and support, and an evil turn in the affairs of his publishing house, the latter made more acute by the death of Webster, the managing partner, had now not only made heavy inroads into the husband's available resources, but had also seriously impaired the wife's patrimony. No longer able to afford the expense of the home they had built in Hartford, they closed it after seventeen happy years, and seeking a more modest scale of living, in June, 1891, departed for a long sojourn in Germany, the south of France and Italy. Quarry Farm did not see them again until May, 1895.

During this period Mark Twain made business trips of varying length to America, but none of them helped to restore order and hope to his muddled affairs, and in April, 1894, the firm of Webster & Company made an assignment for the benefit of its creditors and closed its doors, owing more than two hundred thousand dollars, nearly a third of which represented money supplied by Mrs. Clemens. The remainder of the year and the early months of 1895 Mark Twain rested with his family in France or worked on the final chapters of what some regard as the finest expression of his genius, *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*. While thus engaged, although loathing the platform and all that went with it, he resolved upon a tour that should compass the globe, in the course of which, by readings from his works, he hoped to earn the money needed to pay his debts in full.

With this purpose in mind the Clemens family sailed for America on May 11 and a few days later were once more at Quarry Farm. There during the weeks that followed arrangements were completed for the series of readings about to begin, and Mark Twain did almost the last writing he was ever to do in his hilltop study. There also it was decided that Mrs. Clemens and their daughter Clara should accompany him in his long tour, while Susy and Jean Clemens remained with their aunt, Mrs. Crane, at Quarry Farm. They left Elmira on the night of July 14, 1895, and their last sight, as the train got under way, was of Susy, standing with others on the station platform, and waving them good-by.

From the outset, Mark Twain's readings proved a complete success. Their purpose had become a matter of common knowledge, and great audiences greeted him at each appearance. When the party reached the Pacific Coast he was able to forward five thousand dollars to New York to place against his debt account. They left Vancouver on August 23, beginning the long pilgrimage that was to carry them to Australia, New Zealand, India, the Island of Mauritius and South Africa, whence on July 14, 1896, they sailed for England, where it had been planned that Susy and Jean, companioned by Katie Leary, an old and trusted servant, should join them. The last leg of their voyagings was a restful and happy one, for Mark Twain had earned money enough to pay his creditors dollar for dollar, and leave him a free man.

Husband, wife and daughter reached Southampton on the last day of July, and in preparation for the expected arrival on August 12 of Susy and her sister, leased for the summer a house at Guilford. But on August 12, instead of Katie and the girls, came a letter saying that Susy

was ill, and that there would be a delay in their sailing. A cabled request for later news brought a reply that the sick girl was facing a slow recovery, and the same day Mrs. Clemens and Clara sailed for America to nurse her. This was on August 15, and three days later when they were in mid-ocean Susy Clemens died of cerebral fever [Editors' note: actually spinal meningitis] in the old home at Hartford. She had been ailing for a time at Quarry Farm; seeking change and relief had gone for a visit with Mrs. Charles Dudley Warner at Hartford, and by a physician's orders removed to the quiet of her own home there to face an untimely end.

Alone in the hired house at Guilford, despairing and hopeless, Mark Twain received the cabled news of her passing. Mother and sister, arriving three days later in New York were greeted with the same sad tidings and that afternoon caught a through train to Elmira. There Susy had already been taken, and the following day, after a service in the great house where she was born, they buried her by the side of her little brother, and ordered a headstone inscribed with these lines which they had found in Australia:

Warm summer sun shine kindly here;
 Warm southern wind blow softly here;
 Green sod above lie light, lie light –
 Good night, dear heart, good night, good night.

Only parts of the after history of the Clemens family and of the conditions under which Mark Twain's last books were written claim a place in the present chronicle. There were periods of residence and labor in England, Germany and Italy and in and about New York. They were living at Riverdale on the Hudson when, early in 1903, the failing health of Mrs. Clemens prompted plans for another indefinite stay in Italy. Not, however, before a final summer at Quarry Farm. They reached that beloved place on July first, and remained there three peaceful months, in the course of which Mark Twain did what was probably the very last of his writings in his old study, his pathetic "A Dog's Tale." They sailed for Italy on October 24, and early in November were settled in a fine old palace near Florence. But this last quest for health proved a vain one. Mrs. Clemens died in her sleep on the afternoon of June 5, and on July 14, after services in the Elmira home of her girlhood and young womanhood, was laid to rest by the side of Susy and little Langdon. "Imagine," the husband had written his old friend Twichell from Florence, "a man

worth a hundred millions who finds himself penniless and fifty millions in debt in his old age. I was richer than any other person in the world, and now I am that pauper without peer.”

Mark Twain passed no more summers at Quarry Farm. For him there was now only sadness in its beautiful and tender associations. His home for the brief measure of living that remained to him after July 18, 1908, was a house which had been built for him on a hilltop near to Redding, Connecticut and to which he gave the name of Stormfield. A year and a half later this new home was witness to his last great sorrow. His youngest daughter, Jean, had been long subject to sudden and serious illness, [epilepsy] and on the morning before Christmas in 1909 death came to her in her bath. Three days later, the father unable to make the winter journey, she was buried in Elmira.

After that, with the steadily failing strength of age, there was only quiet waiting for the end by a desolate and lonely old man. Mark Twain died at Stormfield at the sunset hour of April 21, 1910, and was duly borne to Elmira to sleep by the side of his wife and those others who had preceded him. His grave now marked by a tall shaft of marble, has become a shrine for summer pilgrims from a hundred lands.

Chapter Two

The Langdon Family

Much has been written about the influence of Olivia Langdon Clemens on her husband, Mark Twain. Outside of Elmira, however, little has appeared in print about her family, a family that produced successful and able leaders in generation after generation. The first Jervis Langdon, who established the family in Elmira, was born in Oneida, New York, on January 9, 1809, the descendant of a pre-Revolutionary New England family. His father, Andrew Langdon, died when he was only three years old, but his mother, who married two additional times, lived to be nearly ninety-one, outliving her son by nearly three years. Jervis Langdon and his wife, Olivia Lewis Langdon, were liberal for their day, people of strong conviction and deeply religious. They opposed slavery, supported the Park Church and its unconventional clergyman, Thomas K. Beecher, and won the respect and affection of their fellow townspeople by many individual and civic benevolences.

Their first daughter, Susan, was adopted, although the fact was not publicized and she was completely a member of the family. She and her husband, Theodore Crane, were given Quarry Farm, and their relationship with the Clemens family was especially close. Olivia Langdon, Mark Twain's "Livy," was named after her mother. The family had a habit of repeating names that makes a genealogical chart a necessity in keeping the various members of the family straight. As a young lady of sixteen, Livy fell on an icy pavement and, for two years, did not leave her bed. She was cured, at last, by a faith healer who came to Elmira, "though she could never walk more than a few hundred yards without stopping to rest and she never became actually strong."

General Charles Jervis Langdon (the title from a commission as Commissary General by the governor of New York), carried on the family tradition of economic success and church and civic leadership. He married Ida Clark and their three children were named Julia Olivia, the second Jervis, and Ida. Ida was the same age as Jean, the Clemens's youngest daughter, and the cousins were close companions during the summers at Quarry Farm and in Elmira. Ida Langdon was a graduate of Bryn Mawr and received a Master's Degree and a Doctorate in English from Cornell University. She taught at Bryn Mawr and Wellesley Colleges before becoming Professor of English Literature at Elmira College from

1920 to 1942 and Professor Emeritus from 1945 until her death in 1964. She was respected as a scholar and teacher and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Elmira College in 1955.

Ida's brother, the second Jervis Langdon, was also very close to the Clemens family. He gave strong support to Mark Twain at the time of daughter Jean's tragic death and was present when Mark Twain died, taking the responsibility for the funeral arrangements. Later he comforted Clara at the time of the death of her husband, Ossip Gabrilowitsch, for whom he had been best man. A graduate of Cornell and a loyal supporter and trustee of the university, he returned to Elmira to take charge of J. Langdon & Co., and, in the tradition of his father and grandfather, to become one of Elmira's first citizens. A life-long Republican, he served as City Alderman, headed a host of civic organizations, and was a supporter and active lay leader of the Park Church. He was described as "a gentleman in the very true and all-inclusive sense of the word."

The third Jervis Langdon to achieve distinction, one of the fourth generation of the Elmira Langdons, was Jervis Langdon, Jr., son of Jervis and Eleanor Sayles Langdon. He was, like his father, a graduate of Cornell University, and of Cornell Law School. His long career in railroading began with the Lehigh Valley and included the New York Central and the Chesapeake and Ohio. He became president of the Baltimore and Ohio, the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific, and was the last president of the bankrupt Penn Central before it merged with Con-Rail. During World War II, he was stationed in Southeast Asia, rising to the rank of Colonel and winning the Legion of Merit.

The Langdon family home in downtown Elmira was a large Victorian mansion on the corner of Main and Church Streets. With the exception of the Park Church across the street, it was probably the most historic building in the city. Here, Mark Twain and Livy Langdon were married in a quiet ceremony that attracted only the briefest notice in the press. "—Mr. SAMUEL L. CLEMENS, one of the editors of the Buffalo Express, and well known as "MARK TWAIN," and Miss OLIVIA LANGDON, daughter of JERVIS LANGDON, Esq., were married at the residence of the bride's father in this city, last evening."

Through the years, many distinguished visitors, including President Ulysses S. Grant and James G. Blaine, passed through its doors. Rudyard Kipling made his celebrated call on Mark Twain in the old house. In 1939, the mansion was demolished, and many Elmira through the years have tended to agree with journalist Frank Tripp who wrote in the Star-Gazette of December 17, 1952, "I shall never pass the corner of Main and Church Streets that a feeling of shame and injury does not rise within me. Shame that Elmira thought so lightly of its past. Injury that a mart stands where a shrine should be.

“On that site should still stand the stately home of one of Elmira’s grandest old families. To a whole generation it was a majestic monument to 19th Century gracious living.

“The Langdons grew up in that house, centered in broad, graceful, shaded grounds, where stores now stand and cars park. As much immortal love centered around that house as centers about any one spot in all the valley... .

“That was the house and the property which the Langdon family tried to virtually give to the City of Elmira; and which a stupid Common Council refused in its penny-pinching wisdom. Tragic folly which upset a whole area which is sacred to Elmirans. From that spot can be inwardly felt, and much seen, of that which is most romantic in Elmira’s history.

“Imagine it a civic center, museum, shrine—looking across at historic Wisner Park, Trinity, the Baptist, The Park churches. Father Tom Beecher, memorials to our soldier dead—and Mark Twain Hotel in the background.

“Instead—well, go look!”

When the Langdon home was demolished in 1939, the iron fence surrounding the property was given to Elmira College where it was erected and still stands along the campus on the east side of Park Place.

Elmira’s Langdon Family

by Ida Langdon

Ida Langdon, Samuel Clemens’s niece, spoke about her Uncle Sam in public at a Mark Twain Festival sponsored by Elmira College in 1960 to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the birth of Samuel Clemens, the 90th anniversary of his marriage, and the 50th anniversary of his death. She was the author of “Elmira’s Langdon Family,” published in the Chemung Historical Journal, Vol. 1, No. 2, (December, 1955) pp. 51-58.

It was in the year 1845, when he was 36 years old, that Jervis Langdon came with his wife and eldest child, Susan, to live in Elmira. For two years the family of three occupied a small dwelling on the corner of Main and Second Streets built by Mr. Anson Ely. Then Mr. Langdon brought what has been described as a modest little house on East Union Street; and finally, after a number of years, he purchased, rebuilt, and enlarged the residence, also built by Mr. Ely, which stood on what is now

Langdon Plaza, on the corner of Main and Church Streets. There on the sixth of August, 1870, at the age of sixty-one, he died.

Mr. Langdon moved to Elmira from Ithaca. His life so far had all been passed in small New York State towns and villages. He was born in Vernon, Oneida County, in 1809, the son of Andrew and Eunice Langdon. When he was three years old his father died, and he was still a boy when he began to earn his way and contribute to the support of his mother. Of the young Langdon, Mr. Thomas K. Beecher said in a memorial address given in the Opera House:

“The ordinary life of a country boy at home and at school was his until he passed sixteen, when he went into a common country store in Vernon kept by a Mr. Stevens. Langdon was a quick, intelligent, slender, fair-haired, diffident youth: better esteemed by those he served than he was by himself—a trait which he never outgrew.”

From this start in Mr. Stevens’s general store and after some experience in a larger one in Ithaca, the eighteen-year-old lad was sent alone to open a branch in Enfield. There he was faithful to his task, satisfactory to his boss, but not happy in his surroundings. Enfield was a remote, almost a wild, little settlement in the hills, and young Langdon was lonely, missed his friends, and longed to return, as after a time he did, to Ithaca. There followed years in Salina (a village later absorbed into Syracuse), again in Enfield, again in Ithaca, and in Millport, where he lived from 1838 to 1843.

Lumbering In 1845

During the last two years before coming to Elmira, Jervis Langdon had for a third period, been in Ithaca, and there had begun, as agent and later a partner of Mr. T. S. Williams, to deal in lumber. The Elmira of 1845 was a lumbering village, and Mr. Langdon’s undertakings were timely. They broadened and developed rapidly. The firm of Andrus and Langdon was established. Chemung pine was in demand far afield from the valley. The Chemung River and the Chemung Canal were in steady use for its transportation. From lumber, by way of a costly venture in the production of lead, Mr. Langdon turned his attention to coal. He bought mines in the Pennsylvania fields, notably in Shamokin, and had large holdings in Nova Scotia. This “gigantic business enterprise” eventually stretched into many states of the Union.

In 1870 the firm of J. Langdon & Co. was formed with J. D. F. Slee, Theodore Crane (Mr. Langdon's son-in-law), and Charles J. Langdon, (his son), as partners.

There had been ups and downs in Mr. Langdon's career, but the main direction was up, and he became for his day a very successful man of business.

Another side of Jervis Langdon however was more memorable. He was a man of extraordinary warmth of heart and generosity. Imagination and sympathy marked all his human relationships. His dealings with people were straightforward and kind—not really quixotic, but at times approaching it. In the memorial address quoted above, having devoted many words to concrete instances of Jervis Langdon's gentleness, fairness, and benevolence, Mr. Beecher breaks off as though in some frustration with a single sentence which is also in single paragraph: "Mr. Langdon was often-times too tenderhearted."

Worked For Abolition

Be that as it may, it is certain that he gave himself in effective service to his friends and his fellow-citizens, to local civic and religious organizations, and to affairs of national import. His work as an abolitionist illustrated all these traits of character plus fearlessness and the capacity for righteous indignation. He was a "conductor" in the Underground, and he and his wife were among the group of men and women who broke away from the Presbyterian Church and founded the Park Congregational Church, whose charter members were unanimous and out-spoken for the abolition of slavery. Mr. and Mrs. Langdon counted themselves fortunate to be able to back the young institution financially when among its pressing needs was a new church building. And between three generations of their family and the great pastor of that church, Thomas K. Beecher, there existed a bond of affection which never altered except to increase.

A Much Loved Home

The big brown house (gray for a period) on the corner of Main and Church Streets where the Langdons lived was a much loved home. The acreage around it, which included fully half the block, with the vine-covered stable standing on First Street, was planted with some rare and many fine native trees; supplied with greenhouses (one of them for plants and flowers, the other mainly for grapes, but sheltering also a

mammoth night-blooming cereus given to prolific blooming at twilight); bright with formal flower beds; ornamented by a fairly complicated low, boxwood labyrinth, alluring yet terrifying to the very young and still short; adorned in summer with palms in green tubs (they were a trifle incongruous among the apple trees left from a former orchard, but all except the purists admired them); and dotted with fountains and canopied iron garden-seats. Hammocks and bird cages, their occupants only mildly disturbed by an occasional passing horse-car, hung on the front porch.

Olivia Lewis Langdon

Mrs. Jervis Langdon (born Olivia Lewis, in Lenox, New York) was a striking personality. She was intellectual and she was practical; she was socially inclined and socially gifted. She was much interested in the furnishing of this house, in the collecting of a “family library,” the cultivation and distribution of her hot-house flowers and fruits, and the presence of her friends in frequent gatherings that, in the retrospect, would seem to have been a felicitous combination of informality and convention—warmly hospitable occasions, marked by considerable originality—probably Victorian of the pleasantest type.

But Mrs. Langdon’s interests extended far beyond her home. She, like her husband, was a reader and a student of public affairs. She kept herself well informed on what went on in Washington and in Albany. She was as opposed to slavery as Jervis Langdon himself, and as ready to be actively helpful in the cause of abolition. Garrison, Gerrit Smith, Frederick Douglass, and other well-known emancipationists, were welcome guests in her home. To extend this hospitality was her joy, but it took the courage of her conviction.

Mr. and Mrs. Langdon’s oldest child, Susan (later Mrs. Theodore Crane), while still a little girl, was her father’s frequent companion on the drives in which he found refreshment and diversion. Like him she loved high places, and it was to her great joy that he decided to buy a plain little wooden house that they often passed on the crest of East Hill. The term “week-end” was not in general use in the first half of the nineteenth century, but it was for “week-ends” that the cottage was acquired, a haven for the often over-worked and over-weary Jervis Langdon. Its enlargement and improvement soon became a great interest. Mr. Beecher eventually proposed its name—Quarry Farm. It was bequeathed to Mrs. Crane, who had so loved it as a young girl, and became her home.

‘Charley’ Meets Samuel Clemens

Mr. and Mrs. Langdon had besides Susan, two other children, Olivia born in 1845, and Charles born in 1849. Jervis Langdon like many another father, was eager to have his son’s education exceed his own. Charles was sent to the famous, old Gunnery School for boys. He did not proceed to college. Instead he took a journey of a kind not then at all usual for a youth to make. His father sent him abroad on a sort of “grand tour,” and that the experience might surely be a rich and rewarding one, he arranged to have Professor Darius Ford, then teaching in Elmira College, accompany him as tutor and companion. [Editors’ Note: Professor Ford was **not** on the *Quaker City* trip. In 1869 he did accompany Charles Langdon as tutor on a trip around the world.] In 1867 the boy and his older friend set off on the side-wheel steamer, *Quaker City*, to visit Europe and North Africa. There were rare adventures ahead, and there was a young journalist aboard to record and make the most of them. The story of the liking that sprang up between Samuel Clemens and the much younger “Charley” Langdon is a nice one, especially the episode of the daguerreotype.

Charles was carrying with him a daguerreotype of his sister Olivia to whom he was devoted. One day, possibly seeking diversion, possibly homesick, he showed the little portrait to Sam Clemens, who instantly was possessed by its beauty, and experienced something like love at first sight. At any rate, it was agreed that as soon as possible after both young men were in America again Mr. Clemens should be introduced to Miss Langdon.

The first meeting was in New York where Mr. Jervis Langdon, Olivia, and Charles were staying briefly at the old St. Nicholas Hotel. Mark Twain was asked to dine with them and to go afterwards to Steinway Hall to hear a reading by Charles Dickens. The evening sufficed to prove to young Clemens that the actual girl far surpassed the charm of the daguerreotype. Before very long the invitation to visit his family promised by Charles was received and Mark Twain came hot-foot to Elmira.

Livy and Sam

Now, the center of their hospitable attention, he really burst upon the Langdons. Their reaction has not always been very accurately described. He was, it is true, unlike any one they (or any body else) had ever seen. But his Western gusto and innate originality did not, as has so

often been said, shock them: it did astonish and fascinate them. Left to themselves they would perhaps never have thought of him as a husband for Olivia. But they were not in this matter left to themselves. It was soon clear that Livy and Sam loved each other. Livy's brother already had a strong liking for his stimulating travel mate, and Livy's parents soon felt confidence in his sincerity, delight in his personality, and admiration for his character. They gave him their affection unreservedly. Shortly there was an engagement (during which it is interesting to know that the two young people read proof together on *Innocents Abroad*), and in February, 1870, less than a year before Jervis Langdon's death, Olivia Langdon was married to Samuel Clemens by Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, in the house among the many trees across from The Park Church.

Charles Langdon's Active Life

The year 1870 was momentous for young Charles Langdon. His sister's wedding, his father's death, his coming of age, and his assumption of the formidable responsibilities of the estate left him and of J. Langdon & Co., were followed by his marriage to Ida Clark, daughter of Jefferson Burr Clark of Chemung and Elmira.

Charles brought his young and beautiful wife to live in the Langdon home. His life was active. He made friends easily, and took an interest in civic and community enterprises of varied kinds. He served on the Common Council. He was a member of the Volunteer Fire Department. He held the office of Police Commissioner many times and took great pride in the force. His alliance with the Republican Party was undeviating, and at times exuberantly demonstrated. On the evenings when some candidate for office (in the right political camp!) was in town, and the bands were on the march, the Langdon grounds were hung with Japanese lanterns and aglow with Greek fire. On one such occasion Mr. Langdon's younger daughter and the very small son of Mr. J.D.F. Slee were, in the interests of a really telling effect, respectively attired as the Statue of Liberty and Uncle Sam, and as the parade went past stood with their elders on the Main Street porch. Unfortunately as the V.I.P., whoever he was, rode by in an open landau, the grown people surged forward in enthusiasm and completely eclipsed both Liberty and Uncle Sam.

In 1880 Charles J. Langdon was a delegate to the National Convention in Chicago where he fought hard in the losing battle for Grant. In the same year he was appointed Commissary General on Governor Cornell's staff, which accounts for the title commonly used before his

name. He was a major in the 110th Battalion of the New York State militia. Finally he was a faithful supporter of local “charities,” as the various branches of welfare work were then quite simply called. In 1905 General Langdon terminated his inherited interests in coal and railroads, and devoted himself to other business.

Another Stalwart Jervis

At the time of his death in November, 1916, the references to his integrity, broad sympathies, and generosity were reminiscent of the admiration that had been felt for his father. He was survived by his wife and three children—two daughters, Julia Olivia (Mrs. Edward Eugene Loomis), and Ida, and between them in age, a son who carried on into this third generation of Elmira Langdons his grandfather’s name, Jervis.

Outside of his home and Quarry Farm, the home of his aunt, the two major influences in the childhood of this second Jervis Langdon were, it would seem, an early friendship between him and Mr. Beecher—that born teacher, who, under the unpretentious slogan “learn to work and try to help,” gathered boys about him in a kind of eager and admiring apprenticeship to his extraordinary manual skills—and his membership (probably a charter membership) in Mr. Rufus Stanley’s “Rambling Club.” Jervis was full of zest for the long country walks, and very happy in the companionship of the other young “Ramblers” and their unique leader.

He went to the Bryant Hall School in Elmira, had the greater part of a year in Europe with his mother and sisters, and in 1893 entered Cornell University from the Cascadilla School in Ithaca. During the first years after his graduation he lived in the family home, sharing and later carrying on his father’s business interests. In 1902 he married Eleanor Sayles, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Halsey Sayles. In 1924 his aunt, Mrs. Susan Crane, died and left him Quarry Farm. Many of his happiest childhood associations were with that lovely place—a sort of golden world to him and his sisters. Mr. and Mrs. Langdon and their two children soon went to the hill-top to live and Quarry Farm became their permanent home.

Devotion To Cornell

Throughout Jervis Langdon’s life his college was one of his chief devotions, and after his graduation as Bachelor of Letters in 1897, he became a hard working alumnus. He put time and energy into the affairs

of the Cornellian Council, the official fund-raising organization of the University, carrying the campaign up and down and across the country. During his presidency the Council raised nearly \$4,000,000 for the University. From 1930 to 1940, Mr. Langdon was a trustee of Cornell, and for five years a member of the executive committee of the board. He served in the group that selected Edmund E. Day as president of Cornell. He served on the Building and Grounds Committee.

“His intense interest in the welfare of students made it natural for him to be on the Board on Student Health and Hygiene ... and also on the Board of Governors of Willard Straight Hall.”

These were the chief ways in which he was able to be of use to his *Alma Mater*. **FLAG**

To the life of his community his contributions were varied and unremitting, as is shown in the following paragraph taken from an article published in *The Star-Gazette* at the time of his death:

“The impression of his work for Elmira is left on many phases of the city’s church, civic, business and social life. To every cause in which he worked ... he gave leadership, counsel, and quiet, unstinted devotion that earned the respect and the affection of those with whom he was associated.



Clemens-Langdon Cousins. Left to right: Julia Langdon, Suzy Clemens, Jean Clemens, Jervis Langdon, Ida Langdon, Clara Clemens. Photograph courtesy of Jervis Langdon.

“The range of his interests is shown by a partial list of his activities—The Park Church to which he gave a lifetime of devoted services; the Chemung Canal Trust Company of which he was a director; the Arnot-Ogden Hospital ... of which he was a trustee; the Elmira Rotary Club of which he was past president... ; the Elmira Association of Commerce of which he was a past president and for many years an ardent supporter; the Community Chest which he served as president and which always found him in a position of responsibility; Cornell University... ; America’s efforts in two world wars to which he gave unsparingly of his time, means, and efforts; the Red Cross which he led as chairman for many years in Chemung County, his service including the 1935 flood disaster in the area; and his membership in an active support of civic and cultural groups almost without number.”

Mr. Langdon was, in short, turned to by others in a multitude of problems, some of them lesser, day-to-day problems, some of them of major import and complexity; and in his conduct of them his was, in the words of a friend, “As unblemished a record as any man ever left behind.”

Jervis Langdon died in December, 1952. A modest man, he was the author of two privately printed pamphlets, *Mark Twain in Elmira* (1935) and *Samuel Langhorne Clemens* (no date), included in this volume.

FLAG

ok to leave changes?

Sources

The Rev. Thomas K. Beecher’s eulogy of August 6, 1870, for Jervis Langdon.

Elmira Star-Gazette, December 17, 1952.

The Decline and Fall of the Langdon Home

by George H. Winner

In 1939, faced with high taxes and maintenance costs and bids to buy the Langdon Mansion property for commercial use, Jervis Langdon offered the Langdon property to the City of Elmira at its assessed valuation. The story of what followed the offer was told by one of the city officials of the time, George H. Winner, in an article, “The Decline and Fall of the Langdon Home,” published in the Chemung Historical Journal, Vol. 16, No. 1 (September, 1970), pp. 1951-1956.

My sole purpose in writing this article is to set the record straight on the history of Langdon Plaza. Speeches, conversations and newspaper articles questioning the actions of the City Fathers in declining to accept the offer of Jervis Langdon to sell his family homestead at West Church and North Main Streets have continued over the years, usually highly critical in tone and invariably inaccurate in content.

Hopefully, this article will clear the air a little bit so that future observations on the subject will encompass a fairer appreciation of the economic climate of the times and the resulting pressures on the City Council.

I was one of the official family, assistant corporation counsel to be exact, during the months of 1939 when the discussions and decisions on the acceptance or rejection of the offer of Jervis Langdon to sell the family home at Church and Main Streets were made. All of the others, except Councilman Frank Brooks, with whom I have conferred, have passed away.

To bolster my imperfect memory, I have read everything concerning this matter which I could find in the daily and Sunday papers during 1939 and have assembled such other data bearing on or calculated to enlighten the entire situation. Let's then proceed with the action. The cast of characters were: *Jervis Langdon*, the offeror; City Manager *Ralph D. Klebes*; Mayor *Maxwell Beers*; Councilmen *Clarence Ellis*, *Arthur Mann*, *George Gillespie*, *Frank Brooks*; Corporation Counsel *George G. Reynolds*, Superintendent of Building Construction *Charles Sterling* and City Clerk *Russell F. Gee, Sr.*

Exhibit 1

Initial communication from the City Manager to the Council, dated February 9, 1939, reads as follows:

"A delegation called upon me last evening with reference to the Langdon property on Main Street, extending from Church to West First Street. This property has a frontage of 300 feet on Main Street, and 300 feet on both of the other streets. It is assessed for \$51,300.

"Mr. Langdon has had two recent offers for the property for commercial purposes, neither of which would fit in with the surroundings. He does not wish to be put in the position of selling this property and then be criticized at a later date for disposing of the property which could have been used by the city. He must make a decision very soon and has offered, through this committee, to turn it over to the City at

its assessed valuation, payment to be made on a basis satisfactory to the City authorities.

“I was asked to present this to the Council for consideration at the next meeting.”

Exhibit 2

Communication from City Clerk to City Manager dated February 14, 1939.

At a meeting of the Council of the City of Elmira, N.Y., held February 13, 1939, the following Resolution was adopted:

By Councilman Mann:

RESOLVED, that the communication from the City Manager regarding the purchase of the Langdon property at Church and Main Streets, be received and placed on file, pending development of the best means to determine the sentiment of the taxpayers.”

Now starts the great debate.

First, the problem of the use that could be made of the property had to be considered. Suggestions came for a civic auditorium or sports arena, but the serious thought was directed to preserving the beautiful home and grounds for a museum. The latter idea gained the most favor with the City Fathers. After crystalization of this suggestion, the Building Superintendent was directed by the City Manager to prepare a report on the feasibility of adapting this building for a public museum and what the cost would be. The report estimated the cost of \$50,000 for floor supports and decorating. In addition, annual expenses included janitor service and the salaries of personnel to manage the museum. The cost of collecting and renewing suitable items for inclusion in the exhibits to be offered to the public also had to be considered, plus the loss of tax revenue by removal of the property from the tax rolls.

The Mayor and a majority of the City Council were favorable to the proposal as being a most desirable civic enterprise and the offering price of the property was considered reasonable, but there were so many objections based on cost considerations that for weeks the City Fathers worried over what to do in the best interests of the community. In an effort to ascertain the wishes of a majority of the citizens, both taxpayers and non-taxpayers, an informal poll was held through the cooperation of the daily newspapers. (A formal referendum was not legally permissible.) The ballots were printed daily for six (6) days.

Exhibit 3

Sample ballot from *Elmira Star-Gazette*.

Langdon Property Coupon:

Do you favor the City acquiring the LANGDON PROPERTY (Northwest Corner West Church and Main) for civic purposes at a cost of approximately \$57,500? This would mean an increase in tax rate of about \$1.00 per \$1,000 for one year. Or, with the purchase price spread over a term of say 5 years the tax cost would be 20 cents per \$1,000.

If a City Taxpayer Vote Here

___Yes () No ()

If not a City Taxpayer Vote Here

___Yes () No ()

Name _____

Address _____

Mail coupons to: Referendum Editor, *Star-Gazette*

(Printed by request of the City Council)

By counting each ballot as one, whether or not a husband and wife signed, the tally was 150 in favor and 276 opposed. By breaking down the ballots among taxpayers and non-taxpayers, the tally was as follows:

Taxpayers for:.....	110
Taxpayers against:.....	230
Non-Taxpayers for:.....	40
Non-Taxpayers against:.....	46

The original ballots are still available in the Corporation Counsel's office. Some taxpayers took the opportunity to express their views on the ballot besides just voting. Samples:

"It would be a shame to tear that historical home down to build a gas station." "We need badly an historical building, also community center" (these by non-taxpayers). "Stop spending and catch up." "Very misleading (arrow pointing to caption on the coupon). "\$10,000 a year luxury; \$2500 interest; \$2500 lost taxes; \$5000 janitor, heat, light and use it for what?" (these two by city taxpayers). This tally indicates a surprising lack of interest when one considers the vote on Daylight Saving in the same year was 7198 - 4053 for, 3131 against, 12 void. The country was just emerging from the depression; war clouds were gathering; a time of uncertainty existed. Let it be said for the councilmen faced with the

decision of accepting or rejecting this offer that they suffered acutely. No light decision this and hours of conscience-searching appraisal took place. In evaluating their decision today, do not overlook the fact that Langdon Plaza as it developed was not on the drawing boards at the time, and the City Council had no control over aesthetic considerations thereafter. The property was already zoned Business “B” which permitted the use as a shopping plaza.

The tax picture looked something like this. Had the city purchased the property and developed it for a museum undoubtedly bonds to pay for it would have had to be issued—\$50,000, roughly \$1.00 per thousand on the city tax bill. The entire city budget for 1939 was \$1,447,537.68. Interest on bond issues by the city was at the rate of 1.10% and estimating a thirty year issue would cost \$16,500. Because of spiraling costs, salaries, heat, light, insurance and maintenance, costs are too speculative to evaluate over thirty (30) years, but a very significant sum. The city, county, state and school taxes, have amounted to \$171,261.53 over the same period of time, viz., through 1969.

In these days of inflated prices, it is easy to say that the city fathers should have been shot for not buying this corner for \$50,000 (Original offering price was \$51,300, subsequently reduced to \$50,000, and finally to \$47,500). Today’s dollar is something else again.

Following is a resume of the newspaper coverage during 1939. It should be noted parenthetically that neither the *Star-Gazette* nor the *Telegram* took any editorial position one way or the other.

February 15, 1939

Matt Richardson’s column

Jervis Langdon met with a group of men at the Chemung Canal Trust Company to discuss two commercial offers. A committee was appointed to confer with the city administration on a first refusal basis. Committee included chairman, Rev. Albert G. Cornwell, Dr. Arthur W. Booth, A. D. Falck, Matt Richardson.

Committee met with City Manager Klebes, Mayor Beers, Charles W. Perry. Decision reached and Mr. Klebes informed Council \$51,300 was the price tag, being the assessed valuation. Left to taxpayers to decide.

Committee favoring proposal was Cornwell, Booth, Falck, L. D. Clute, Halsey Sayles, S.G.H. Turner, Dr. A. C. Smith, Mayor Beers, Mr.

Frederick Swan, Dr. Frank Christian, Alexander Diven, Douglas Anderson, Matt Richardson.

The article makes a big pitch for acquiring the land for the future to be used as a park in the interim period or for free parking with a shield of trees.

“No doubt thousands will agree it would be almost unforgivable for a visionless city to permit this desirable property to be appropriated for business, attracted to the locality by commercial possibilities other than the community’s welfare. However, this is a matter for the taxpayers to decide and according to present plan, as seen by the Common Council’s actions the other evening, they will be given an opportunity.”

March 2, 1939

Letter to the editor by E. Marshall Bush, suggested a community fund drive with the *Star-Gazette* as sponsor to raise money to buy the Langdon property as a memorial for Mark Twain.

March 8, 1939

Taxpayers began demanding flat 10% cut in budget.

April 25, 1939

City Manager Klebes reminded Council last night that time was running out on Langdon offer. At prior meeting, action was deferred to sound out sentiment of the public. Councilman Brooks said the people were for it—if it is put to some use—not if it is to be bought and left vacant.”

Mayor Beers and Councilman Ellis expressed the sentiment of city officials at the meeting by declaring the property “very desirable” and that it would be a “shame to permit the section to be spoiled by conversion to commercial use.”

Mayor Beers said Mr. Langdon reported that the property had deteriorated structurally to an extent which made it unsafe for use as a public building. Beers said it would probably be necessary to raze the building if bought by the City.

Mark Twain memorial cited as a use. Klebes said Mark Twain had left a few mementos that could be part of a museum.

Patrick Pecararo suggested the property as a site for the Che-mung County Historical Society supported jointly by the city and the county.

Councilman Arthur Mann noted that the cost of the property at \$50,000 represented \$1.00 per \$1000 of assessed valuation on the tax roll. However Mr. Langdon did agree to spread the payments for the property over several years if the City elected to purchase it.

May 4, 1939

Council agreed that no matter of “such vital interest to the taxpayers” should be dropped without some unofficial referendum with Matt Richardson, a member of the Committee to sound out public sentiment.

May 4, 1939

Editorial—Have You Voted, referring to Daylight Saving Time?

May 20, 1939

Headlines by Mayor Beers—City cannot afford to buy property. No works of Mark Twain available. Must be purchased by philanthropic group as a present to City or no dice. Group of citizens have held second meeting—no answer.

May 22, 1939

Ballot—Headlines—Shall the City purchase the Langdon property?

May 23, 1939

Matt Richardson’s column

What to do? Rev. Cornwell’s committee suggests a monument to Mark Twain. *Star-Gazette* only interested as a taxpayer. If expression is negative, the matter will be dropped. “So, now, if Elmira is to acquire the Langdon property, it is up to the taxpayers to make their preference—likewise if they care to forego the opportunity.

“The *Star-Gazette’s* interest is that of the taxpayer in Elmira—its mission here is only to explain the situation thoroughly and set down the facts impartially so that an intelligent opinion can be obtained. Mr. Langdon also takes an unbiased view. He wants the community to have the first shot at it (\$47, 500), but let it be known that if turned down, it will be sold soon for commercial purposes.”

May 26, 1939

Two letters to Editor, E. W. Dana and J. N. Wood—both no.

May 29, 1939

“Resolution by the City Council proposed to buy the Langdon property received from *Star-Gazette*, be placed on file for consideration of the Council.”

May 31, 1939

Letter—Mr. A. W. Pautz—“white-elephant”—nothing in the paper in June or July.

By questioning certain members of the citizens’ committee, I ascertained that the committee only met twice and on the second occasion, though not a member, Seymour Lowman, the president of the Elmira Savings Bank and distinguished citizen, attended and assured the committee that the acquisition of the property for civic purposes was something the city could not afford and that he as a tax payer would bring action to set aside any such decision by the Council.

No civic groups responded to the suggestions raised by Mayor Beers that the property be purchased privately and donated to the city; the committee ceased to function after Mr. Lowman’s visit, the vote in the newspaper poll was negative and the matter dropped without further official action by the City Council.

November 9, 1939

Last item in the paper, “Langdon home picketed in protest to razing of home by E. Marshall Bush, Daniel D. Hungerford and Erwin D. French.”

December 16, 1939

Contractors prepare site.

Chapter Three

Quarry Farm

Although the Clemens family visits to Elmira naturally included some time at the Langdon home downtown, to the whole family Elmira really meant Quarry Farm. Quarry Farm still stands on East Hill about two miles from the center of Elmira. Originally a small farm house purchased with 37½ acres of land by Jervis Langdon in 1869, it was left to Susan Langdon Crane after his death in 1870. Additions to both the house and land converted the simple summer cottage into a comfortable home and farm of more than 250 acres. For a time Theodore Crane and his wife operated a large dairy there, producing the first certified milk in the vicinity and supplying the milk for the D. L. & W. trains.

The road to Quarry Farm, so named because of an old stone quarry on the property, climbed a steep hill past the Elmira Water Cure sanitarium run by Doctors Silas and Rachel Gleason and the home of the Rev. Thomas K. and Julia Beecher. Both were favorite stopping places for Mark Twain when he walked to and from downtown Elmira. He was much impressed with Dr. Rachel Gleason whom he insisted on bringing to Buffalo to nurse Livy after the birth of their first child. The Beecher cottage across from the Water Cure was also a convenient and congenial place to break the walk.

For the horses who had to make the steep climb pulling carriages or wagons, four watering troughs were placed along the road, each dedicated to one of the Clemens children. These testimonies to the Clemens family's concern for animals remain today as tangible evidence of Mark Twain's association with Elmira. In 1910, The Elmira Advertiser, in its obituary of Mark Twain, commented, "The watering troughs along the hill side, marked with the names of the Clemens children, are another reminder. Stone watering troughs they are, and each marked with the name of a son or daughter... . One trough lies above the Crane farm, and the other three below, toward the city; and it is pleasant to think of the coolness and refreshment that the waters, brought from fountains in the hills to these watering places, have been to all travelers over the hills, all the years."

Two of the watering troughs are still on the Langdon property. The earliest, named for the infant son who died at eighteen months, is beside the road near the house. It has the inscription "Langdon Clemens 1870." Suzy's watering

trough, the most elaborate, sits in the fields below the house where the old road was located. On it is the inscription, "Olivia Susan Clemens March 19, 1872 - August 18, 1896." The third watering trough was brought to Strathmont when it was the site of a regional museum. In 1976 it was moved again, as a Bicentennial project, to the Elmira College campus and placed beside the study. The inscription is "Clara L. Clemens 1874." The trough for Jean Lampton Clemens, the youngest daughter, was discovered several years ago in a ditch and is now beside the road at Quarry Farm. It differs from the others in that the inscription is on the end rather than the side. It should read, "Jean. 1880," but the "n" was carved upside down. [The watering troughs for Langdon, Olivia Susan, and Jane (Jean) Lampton now reside alongside the roadside at Quarry Farm.]

Quarry Farm was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. It was given to Elmira College by Jervis Langdon, Jr., the fourth generation of the Langdon family to own the property. The house has been enlarged over the years since the Clemens family visits, most notably in 1923 with the addition of an attractive library, but the view from the house across Elmira to the hills of Pennsylvania remains the same. The view from the site of the famous study, however, has been obstructed by nearly a century of growth. Only the stone steps in the woods mark the original location of the study that Susan Crane had built for her brother-in-law in 1874. He described it in that same year in a letter to a friend in Edinburgh:

My study is a snug little octagonal den, with a coal-grate, 6 big windows, one little one, and a wide doorway (the latter opening upon the distant town.) On hot days I spread the study wide open, anchor my papers down with brickbats and write in the midst of the hurricanes, clothed in the same thin linen we make shirts of. The study is nearly on the peak of the hill; it is right in front of the little perpendicular wall of rock left where they used to quarry stones. On the peak of the hill is an old arbor roofed with bark and covered with the vine you call the "American Creeper"—its green is almost bloodied with red. The Study is 30 yards below the old arbor and 100 yards above the dwelling-house. It is remote from all noises... .

Now isn't the whole thing pleasantly situated?

In the picture of me in the study, you glimpse (through the left-hand window) the little rock bluff that rises behind the pond, and the bases of the little trees on top of it. The small square window is over the fireplace; the chimney divides to make room for it. Without the stereoscope it looks like a framed picture. All the study windows have Venetian blinds... .

For years after Mark Twain's death, the study was the goal of hikers and the object of pilgrimages. It was also, unfortunately, the victim of occasional vandalism and of gradual deterioration. In 1952 it was moved to the Elmira College campus and completely restored. Here it is accessible to the public and attracts many visitors each year. The small window over the fireplace is not there, however. It was bricked in to improve the fireplace draft in the 1880s, at least seventy years before the study was moved. Visitors who are familiar with Mark Twain's own description often count "the six big windows" and ask about the small one.

The study at Quarry Farm was an ideal place to write. Mark Twain was working on *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in July, 1883, when he described his progress to William Dean Howells:

I haven't piled up MS so in years as I have done since we came here to the farm three weeks and a half ago. Why, its like old times, to step right into the study, damp from the breakfast table, and sail right in and sail right on, the whole day long, without thought of running short of stuff or words. I wrote 4000 words to-day and I touch 3000 and upwards pretty often, and don't fall below 2600 any working day. And when I get fagged out, I lie abed a couple of days and read and smoke, and then go it again for 6 or 7 days. I have finished one small book, and am away along in a big one that I half-finished two or three years ago. I expect to complete it in a month or six weeks or two months more. And I shall like it, whether anybody else does or not.

He wrote to his mother at the same time, telling her, "This summer it is no more trouble to me to write than it is to lie." Quarry Farm was not all work,

however. In the midst of his work on *Huckleberry Finn*, he took time out to lay out an English history game.

... I struck an idea for the instruction of the children, and went to work and carried it out. It took me all day. I measured off 817 feet of the road-way in our farm grounds, with a foot rule, and then divided it up among the English reigns, from the conqueror down to 1883, allowing one foot to the year. I whittled out a basket of little pegs and drove one in the ground at the beginning of each reign, and gave it that King's name. ... I measured all the reigns exactly—as many feet to the reign as there were years in it. You can look out over the grounds and see the little pegs from the front door—some of them close together, like Richard II, Richard Cromwell, James II, &c; and some prodigiously wide apart, like Henry VIII, Edward III, George III, &c. It gives the children a realizing sense of the length or brevity of a reign. Shall invent a violent game to go with it.

According to Clara, “the game consisted in racing past the stakes and calling out the names and dates of the numerous kings and their reigns. The panting aspirant was pronounced victor according to the lack of mistakes his voice made while his feet led the pace.”

One aspect of the meaning of Quarry Farm to Mark Twain may be discovered in his description of a sunset in September, 1876 in a letter to Howells:

The farm is perfectly delightful this season. It is as quiet and peaceful as a South Sea Island. Some of the sunsets which we have witnessed from this commanding eminence were marvelous. One evening a rainbow spanned an entire range of hills with its mighty arch, and from a black hub resting upon the hill-top in exact centre, black rays diverged upward in perfect regularity to the rainbow's arch and created a very strongly defined and altogether the most majestic, magnificent and startling half-sunk wagon wheel

you can imagine. After that, a world of tumbling and prodigious clouds came drifting up out of the West and took to themselves a wonderful rich and brilliant green color—the decided green of new spring foliage. Close by them we saw the intense blue of the skies, through rents in the cloud-rack, and away off in another quarter were drifting clouds of a delicate pink color. In one place hung a pall of dense black clouds, like compacted pitch-smoke. And the stupendous wagon wheel was still in the supremacy of its unspeakable grandeur. So you see, the colors present in the sky at once and the same time were blue, green, pink, black, and the vari-colored splendors of the rainbow. All strong and decided colors, too. I don't know whether this weird and astounding spectacle most suggested heaven, or hell. The wonder, with its constant stately, and always suprising changes, lasted upwards of two hours, and we all stood on the top of the hill by my study till the final miracle was complete and the greatest day ended that we ever saw.

As with so much else in Mark Twain's life, Quarry Farm too came to be associated with a sense of loss and sadness. His last visit to the farm was in 1904 when Livy's remains were brought back to Elmira for burial. On his last visit to Elmira in April, 1907, he rejected attempts to bring him up the hill to revisit the little study and the scenes of happier years. It was reported that the associations were too tender to be recalled fully.

From My Father, Mark Twain

by Clara Clemens

Some of the Clemens children's happiest childhood memories were associated with Quarry Farm. Clara Clemens, in her book, *My Father, Mark Twain* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931, pp. 59-63; 70-73; 75-76), recalls some stories of the summers at Quarry Farm.

The major part of Father's work was accomplished in the summer, which we spent with my mother's sister, Mrs. Theodore Crane. She lived on the top of a long hill overlooking Elmira, New York. The place was called Quarry Farm, and was a heavenly spot. On a sunny day one could see the Chemung River sparkling far below as it wound its way through the town of Elmira, nestled cozily between the hills surrounding it. At night the streets and houses, though at a great distance, seemed ablaze with artificial fire. It was a lovely sight.

The house in which my aunt lived was simple but very comfortable, with enough rooms to accommodate our family. Susy and I slept together, my younger sister, Jean, roomed with the nurse, and Father and Mother occupied a third room. Mrs. Crane often referred to her home as "Do as you Please Hall," for she wished everyone to feel complete liberty to act and think as he would. Her own nature was so sweet and gentle that one could not imagine a more suitable abode for her than this pictureque and peaceful farm elevated above the plane of ordinary mortals. She was as tranquil and lovable as the trees and flowers, her most constant companions.

Aunt Sue, for whom my elder sister was named, was the one person I have ever seen who appeared to be continually above and beyond the hurts inflicted by human existence. Father sometimes called her Saint Sue, and she returned the compliment by baptizing him Holy Samuel, though with a strong touch of humor in her tone of voice whenever she used this title. Aunt Sue adored Father's little bursts of temper and would laugh at him most heartily. Often he laughed with her, altering his vehement mood instantaneously to one of childlike mirth. These sudden changes from shadow to light, and from light to shadow, were perhaps one of Father's real charms, for the human race likes surprises.

There was a small rise of ground at the summit of the main hill, stretching off to one side like an extra branch to a tree. Halfway up this elevation stood the little octagonal cottage in which father did all his writing. One reached it by a winding path and about twenty stone steps. It was a charming sort of Peter Pan house covered with ivy and surrounded by beautiful wild flowers and morning-glories. Through the tops of the trees an aperture had been made so that Father could enjoy the view of Elmira and the hills beyond—an inspiring place for creative work. In spite of the eight good-sized windows, the air was so permeated with tobacco smoke that it was almost stifling to one unused to it. Father seemed to thrive on it, notwithstanding, and in fact, the less he followed

the good advice of physicians the better he seemed to feel. No exercise, little fresh air, constant inhaling of cigar smoke—all contributed to keep him in good health.

Once settled at the farm for the summer, he had no desire to leave it even for a short visit to town. He was devoted to some of Mother's friends and relatives there, but he very much preferred their coming to see him on the hill than calling on them in the valley. There was a fascination about the peace of the place that worked like a spell. Usually he went to his study about ten o'clock in the morning and remained until five in the afternoon, seldom taking anything to eat or drink in the middle of the day.

We dined at six o'clock, and the evening was spent in various ways. Often Father read aloud to the whole family the work he had accomplished during the day. Again, he and Theodore Crane, his brother-in-law, played games, either chess or cards, while Mother read aloud to the rest of us. No matter how engrossed Father might appear to be in the game he was playing, he managed to hear enough of the reading to throw out very humorous criticisms of the author's style, particularly if the author happened to be Meredith (whom he thought too wordy) or Jane Austen, a pet aversion of his.

Sometimes immediately after dinner, while there was still daylight, we strolled into a large field near by for a strange purpose. A plan had been laid for building a stone tower, at the top of which Father could muse, forgetting the world. Each member of the family was to compete with the others in gathering the greatest number of stones to be used in erecting the tower. I think that Father represented the bottom and I the top of the class in this undertaking. He would pick up a stone, and become so interested in the imprint left in the ground where it had lain or in the shape of the stone itself, that his tongue flowed with observations while his feet stood still. I doubt if he added more than a dozen stones to the pile during one whole summer, and the tower was never built.

A very long stone wall closed in the grounds on one side and extended from the upper gate of entrance to the lower gate, a distance of fifty or sixty yards. It was covered with vines, while by its side were planted many lovely flowers—nasturtiums, pansies, roses, forget-me-nots, and so forth. There is a vivid picture in my mind of two figures on the path engaged in lively conversation. Aunt Sue was picking flowers, and my father had joined her before starting his day's work. His lovely gray hair was shining in the sunlight and his arms, greatly agitated by his thoughts,

made life dangerous for Aunt Sue. Father often joined my aunt on her morning walk by the flowers, and I am certain now that the subject of their talk was frequently the undying topic of religion. My aunt lived by her strong faith in God and all His acts. Father loved to fight her on this subject, and she was big enough to be greatly amused by his original way of putting his questions and objections, instead of resenting his attitude. Her lovely, silver laugh tinkled into the air from the flowery path, and Father continued his attack with more and more vehemence. I believe he thought to himself, "Surely I can make Aunt Sue angry just once if I keep on long enough." But I don't think he ever succeeded.

Mother, who was always in such delicate health that she was unable to do any walking, stayed on the large porch while the others wandered about the grounds or down the road. But there was always some one to stay with her. She was alive with interests of many sorts, never bored as far as one could see, but easily saddened by a gloomy story or any little contretemps. She had a high-strung, nervous nature, and yet such perfect self-control that unless one watched her closely during a dark mood one could not discover it. Her conversation and laughter were apparently free from somber thoughts. She was always more concerned with the problem of making others happy than herself... .

In the town of Elmira, New York, lived my mother's brother, Charles Langdon, and her mother, Mrs. Jervis Langdon, whose husband—my grandfather—had died years before we children were active on the scene. Mr. Charles Langdon, my uncle, was married to a handsome woman and had three children, two girls and a boy, of about the ages of my sisters and me.

The Langdon home was beautiful and most impressive to us. It was full of mysterious staircases and unexpected hallways that led to remote rooms, unused except by the people of our imagination. Whenever word came in the morning that we were to spend the day at the Langdons' in town, we were delirious with joy. Much as we adored life on the hilltop, there was something overwhelmingly adventurous about a trip to the Langdon mansion. First, the long drive down the hill, which always seemed dangerously steep at certain points; the passage through the town full of picturesque glimpses. Then the iron gates at the entrance of the Langdon grounds swung open magically, in response to a mechanical arrangement, so highly ingenious, it seemed to us. The wheel of the carriage passed over an elevated iron bar so arranged in the earth that,

when pressed down by the weight of the carriage, it lifted the lock of the gates and in we drove with the air of conquerors.

Once arrived, there was always great confusion of greetings and exclamations of delight from old and young. (Of course, we six children did not realize that our various parents considered themselves young, too.) The hall and spacious living-room were rather dark, which added to their interest and general personality. The house gave forth a certain individual perfume, also, which was like a welcoming friend to me. And the wide mahogany staircases belonged in an eventful romance. There were three entrances to the grounds by iron gates which made a ringing noise when they clinked into place after being opened and closed. Father reveled in this bit of warning and would say, "You can always escape your enemies in the Langdon house, no matter where they come from, north, east, or west. You can always escape by one gate while they enter by another."

My grandmother Langdon was a strong and lovable personality. She ruled in the house, but she carried a scepter of love, which drew willing obedience from everyone. Generosity was one of her salient characteristics. And the six grandchildren (three Langdons and three Clemenses) greatly appreciated one form it took.

Every summer there was a big celebration of our grandmother's birthday, at which all the guests were presented with more gifts apiece than the birthday child received from all the others combined. At least it seemed so to us. Our infant hearts were overwhelmed by the gorgeous presents we accumulated on grandmother's birthday. We felt almost as if we had cheated some one, and that added to our pleasure. My uncle Charles usually sent up one of his carriages to bring some of our party down the hill from the farm, and had the streets all been decorated in honor of that day it could not have appeared more festive to us.

Frequently we celebrated the occasion with some form of theatricals, or extra-poor music supplied by us children, anxious to try our badly learned lessons in various branches of music on grown-ups who knew even less than we did. We tortured piano, violin, and vocal literature with all the abandon the harmless birthday of an uncomplaining grandmother could possibly warrant. Sometimes my father accepted our invitation to become one of us, and lifted his voice in negro songs with which he had grown up when a baby among Southern slaves. He sang them with much spirit and played his own accompaniments on the piano, as well as he could remember them. Once we acted a charming

little comedy by my cousin, Julia Langdon, now Mrs. E.E. Loomis. On such occasions Father was touchingly considerate and sympathetic with authoress and actors when troubles arose connected with the stage setting, or lack of dressing-rooms, lack of costumes, lack of patience. He always took our affairs as seriously as if we were renowned artists accepted by the world. We could have hugged him for this because, like most children, we were extremely susceptible to the slightest tone of derision. I remember Father was much affected by the quality of naive sincerity and real talent evident in my cousin's play. Therefore, he joyously poured compliments on her head... .

Except for the birthday party at my grandmother's, very little social life was courted by any of the family. My sisters and I were not allowed to go to parties and our parents sought solitude and repose during the summer months on the lovely farm. There was plenty of companionship with animals, however. Of these there were represented various species in the household, both wild and tame. Starting with dogs large enough to be harnessed and pull a little express-cart, we progressed to a couple of donkeys (called "Kadichan" and "Polichon") and, finally, graduated in patience and courage with a pair of ponies in our possession.

Although Father's pet animals were the cats and kittens, to which he gave much attention, he was also interested in our various experiences with the more important four-footed animals, and offered to lend a hand when the donkeys were obstreperous. In one particular case the larger donkey, "Kadichan" (named after the delightful book, *Adventures with a Donkey*), made a ten-strike. The only way my sisters and I had ever succeeded in forcing the animal to go was for one to sit on him while the other walked ahead with a bag of crackers just out of reach of his nose. Of course this meant a lot of discussion as to whose "turn" it was to walk with the crackers, particularly on a very hot day.

Once Father had been listening to our arguments from the porch, when he suddenly joined us with one-hundred-per-cent determination in his eye.

"I'll make that creature do his work," he said, in a tone that sounded almost like a boast, and up he jerked himself into the saddle. But "Kadichan" moved one great ear forward in visible protest and, dropping his head as he raised his hind legs ever so little, he deposited my father in the long grass in front of him. The whole transaction lasted only a second, but Father's bewildered expression of face, as he lay on his back in the grass, engraved an indelible picture in our minds. A DON-

KEY had gotten the best of our father! We giggled ourselves to sleep that night and Father was in good spirits, too. He said he was “more attracted to the donkey than ever before, because the power to accompany an act of vengeance with so much grace and serenity proved the animal to be superhuman.”

My Uncle Mark Twain

by Ida Langdon

Ida Langdon was the same age as her cousin Jean, the youngest Clemens daughter. The six cousins often played together at Quarry Farm or at the Langdon home. On October 13, 1960, at a Mark Twain Festival at Elmira College, of which she was a professor emeritus, Dr. Ida Langdon described life at Quarry Farm in a Convocation talk later published as an article, “My Uncle, Mark Twain,” by The Chemung Historical Journal, Vol. 6, No. 2 (December, 1960), pp. 769-780. Part of her talk, “Lewis and the Runaway,” was published in a later issue, Vol. 6, No. 3 (March, 1961), pp. 820-822. It has been inserted here in its proper sequence.

I have been asked to talk to you during this Festival Week, about Mark Twain and Elmira. Mark Twain was my uncle (by marriage). He was also Samuel Langhorne Clemens. Most of the time by whatever name I refer to him, he will be primarily Mark Twain to you, and primarily my uncle to me. But I cannot see that this will make any difference in the things I have to tell.

As I trace it back to its start my uncle’s connection with Elmira began thousands of miles away in the Bay of Smyrna at the far end of the Mediterranean in the year 1867. Before I tell you of that beginning I must go back of it a bit.

In 1866 Samuel Clemens, already known as Mark Twain, his life as a Mississippi River pilot, and as a prospector in the Nevada mining camps over, was a newspaper reporter in California. His editorials and articles (many of them in the form of letters) were well known and highly relished on the Pacific Coast, but they scarcely paid him a living. He was young and poor, and eager and restless; and as he had at one time gone West in the hope of bettering his fortunes, he now came East. His plan

was to earn money by lecturing, and then to travel for the sort of experience that would freshen and enrich his journalistic work.

In the winter of 1867 his eye fell upon an advertisement in a Brooklyn newspaper of what has since been alluded to as the first 'Mediterranean cruise.' It was to last between five and six months, to take its members into the most ancient and romantic regions, and the notice stressed as of special importance a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The prospectus attracted young Sam Clemens greatly. Here was a chance to cross the ocean, to go to far away lands, do and see marvelous things and gather fabulous materials for his lectures and his journalism. He found a way to do it. One of the Western papers for which he had been a correspondent paid his passage, and sent him off under contract to send back weekly letters. One June 8, 1867 he sailed away on a side wheeler called the *Quaker City*.

Love at First Sight

There were all sorts of people on board, though young Clemens at first thought there were not. He thought they were all ministers. Everyone seems to have been attracted by him, most of them a little warily, some probably against their will, some with unreserved enthusiasm. His appearance was unconventional, and he was very high-spirited. It was soon noted that everyone at the table where he sat (ministers and all) rocked with laughter throughout the meals, and it did not take long for a congenial group of youthful fellow-passengers to form around him. Among them was a boy, considerably younger than he, a boy from Elmira, New York named Charles Langdon, called "Charley"—(my father). Mark Twain and Charley liked each other, and one day in the Gulf of Smyrna, Charley, probably feeling homesick and lonely, and wanting someone to talk to about home and the family, and particularly someone to show a cherished miniature of his sister Olivia, asked Mark Twain into his cabin. She was a lovely young creature, and Mr. Clemens could not put the little portrait down. His reaction to it has often been described as "love at first sight." Whether it was that or not, it is certain that the beauty of the head and face haunted him from the moment that he saw it—and there in the Turkish harbor of Smyrna, I should say that his connection with Elmira began.

When the cruise of the *Quaker City* was over, and not long after, Samuel Clemens met Olivia as Charles Langdon has promised that he should—not yet in Elmira; in New York City. Olivia and her brother were

there with their father, Jervis Langdon, stopping at the old St. Nicholas Hotel. Mark Twain was also in New York, and Mr. Langdon asked his son's cruise friend, about whom he had heard a great deal (but not the half!) to dine with them—and, incidentally, to go in the evening to hear Charles Dickens give readings. Young Clemens came and saw “Livy.” She was more charming, more exquisite than the miniature, and he was in love.

Fairly soon thereafter he paid his first visit to Elmira. Charley had promised to get him asked, and, Mark Twain did not let him dally over securing an invitation from the miniature's parents. He appeared in a flash: red hair, piercing blue eyes, extremely odd clothes, uninhibited Western gusto, and all. It cannot be said that he was not astonishing to the Langdons, but apparently he was equally captivating. They were not quite the hopeless Victorian conservatives that they have been represented in this affair (it was some of the neighbors who were!). They were independent in their social judgements and standards, and something in this extraordinary stranger began to win its way with them at once.

Prolonged Visit

The first visit was expected to last one week. But Mark Twain was not at all ready to leave at the end of one week. He wished to stay longer. This is his biographer, Albert Bigelow Paine's account of how he managed to do it:

“On the morning of the final day he said to young Langdon: ‘Charley, my week is up and I must go home... I ought to go by the first train, ... I am in love—in love with your sister, and I ought to get away from here.’

“The young man was ... very genuinely alarmed. To him Mark Twain was a highly gifted, fearless, robust man—a man's man—and as such, altogether admirable—loveable. But Olivia—Livy—she was to him little short of a saint. No man was good enough for her; certainly not this adventurous soldier of letters from the West. Delightful he was beyond doubt, adorable as a companion, but not a companion for Livy.

“‘Look here, Clemens,’ he said, when he could get his voice, ‘there's a train in half an hour. I'll help you catch it. Don't wait till to-night. Go now.’

“Clemens shook his head.

“‘No, Charley,’ he said in his gentle drawl, ‘I want to enjoy your hospitality a little longer. I promise to be circumspect, and I’ll go to-night.’

“That night, after dinner, when it was time to take the New York train, a light, two-seated wagon was at the gate. The coachman was in front, and young Langdon and his guest took the back seat. For some reason the seat had not been locked in its place, and when, after the good-bys, the coachman touched the horse, it made a quick spring forward, and the back seat, with both passengers, described a half-circle and came down with force on the ... street. Neither passenger was seriously hurt; Clemens not at all—only dazed a little for a moment.” (I cannot agree with Mr. Paine in this. I don’t think he was dazed for a half second. He seems to me to have been exceedingly quick-witted.)

“Then came an inspiration; here was a chance to prolong his visit. When the Langdon household gathered around with restoratives he did not recover too quickly. He allowed them to support him into the house ... place him in an arm-chair and apply remedies. The young daughter of the house especially showed anxiety and attention. This was pure happiness... .

“He recovered in a day or two, but the wide hospitality of the... Langdon home was not only offered now; it was enforced. He was still there two weeks later.”

Married in 1870

The courtship did not progress so rapidly as young Sam would have liked. The Langdons were all drawn to him, but he had burst upon them out of an unknown past, and Mr. Langdon naturally took steps to find out about it. The quest for references had both its amusing and its touching moments, but all the time that it went on Mr. and Mrs. Langdon’s confidence in Samuel Clemens’ sincerity, their admiration for his character, and their pleasure in his personality increased. And ‘Livy’? After a little hesitation ‘Livy’ gave in with all her heart. In February, 1870, they were married in the library of her home by that greatly loved friend of her family, Thomas K. Beecher, pastor of The Park Church.

Now for Mark Twain’s continuing contacts with Elmira—the first return was a sad one. Within a year of the marriage Mr. Jervis Langdon became fatally ill, and Mr. and Mrs. Clemens came at once to Elmira, and here again I quote from Mr. Paine’s Biography, “joined in the nursing (of) Livy’s father, day and night. Clemens surprised everyone by his

ability as a nurse. His delicacy and thoughtfulness were unailing: his original ways of doing things always amused and interested the patient.” Mr. Paine’s words show (do they not?) how completely their new son-in-law had been accepted into the confidence and intimate affection of Olivia’s father and mother.

Susan Langdon Crane

Before I tell you more of Mark Twain’s associations with Elmira I must bring into that story another person, not so far mentioned, who played a very important part in it—Olivia’s elder, married sister, Susan Langdon Crane, “Aunt Sue” to all of us, “Saint Susan” occasionally to Mr. Clemens. I despair of describing her. I can only pile up adjectives, but at least they are well-weighted adjectives. She was gentle, humorous, at times gay, responsive, understanding, tolerant, and very lovely to look at. She was completely *en rapport* with her brother-in-law, Mark Twain—entirely able to cope with his teasing, his sallies, his extravagances and explosions; never ruffled or unduly upset by the differences in their philosophies or religious beliefs—devoted to him as he to her.

Susan Langdon had married Theodore Crane before Samuel Clemens entered the Elmira scene. At her father’s death he left her and her husband a small farm—Quarry Farm—high above the Chemung Valley, where they shortly went to live. And it was there that during the 1870’s and 1880’s the Clemens family spent so many summers.

Quarry Farm was then a cottage-like house that stood (as with some alterations it still stands) on the crest of East Hill. From its vine-hung porch there was a wide view across the roofs and spires of Elmira to the distant ranges of the Pennsylvania hills. Behind it valleys and wood- and farm-lands rolled away into deep country.

It was not more than two and a half miles from the Farm to the center of Elmira, but the road up East Hill had steep pitches and hard pulls for horses. There were no automobiles. Callers came in carriages or in livery hacks, a few walked. (The Cranes and Mr. Clemens frequently walked up and down.) The Farm was never lonely, never monotonous, never dull, but it was utterly quiet and undisturbed. It was a wonderful place for my uncle to work (according to him the best anywhere in the world.) It was also to him a very beautiful place, a place, he said, in which to take a foretaste of Heaven.

Unique Little Octagon

One of the most thoughtful things that Mrs. Crane and her husband ever did for Mr. Clemens was to have built for him in the Spring of 1874, before his arrival for the second of the summer visits, the Study that now belongs to you. That I do not need to describe, do I?

The purpose of this unique little octagon was, of course, to provide Mr. Clemens with uninvaded quiet in which to write. The site chosen for it was the top of a knoll not far away from the farm-house. It was approached by a path winding from the end of the farmhouse porch through an orchard—a path bordered by daisies, buttercups, brown-eyed Susans, clover blossoms and eyebrights. At the end of the path wide stone steps curved up the knoll to the Study. It is not too much to say that Mr. Clemens was stunned with surprise and pleasure when he first saw it.

The summer visits at Quarry Farm were looked forward to with longing. For Mark Twain and “Livy” they meant leisure and peace, and relief from the constant social and professional activities that had closed in around them. Their Hartford home was within fatally easy reach of neighbors, to whom they were devoted, but whose custom it was to run in and out of each other’s unlocked doors at any hour of the day or night. Callers came from the ends of the earth, with letters of introduction, or without them. There were visits from distinguished writers, churchmen, journalists, and actors; there were the constant comings and goings of Mark Twain himself to give lectures, conferences with publishers, attend dinners, accept honors. And upon Mrs. Clemens there were—as you can imagine, the heavy social obligations of a hostess. From all this they made their escape to Elmira.

Children Born at Farm

The Clemens children, Susy, Clara, and Jean (our cousins with whom my sister, brother and I were congenially paired in age), were all three born at Quarry Farm. [Editors’ Note: Contemporary sources indicate that only Clara and Jean were born at Quarry Farm. Susy was born in the Langdon home in downtown Elmira.] For them the place was Paradise. Their days there were brim-full: some study with their mother, much family reading aloud, and all the goings-on of a farm to watch, often to share. In much that they did they had their father’s companionship. They all loved animals, and there were plenty about. Evening after evening Mark Twain waited patiently and long while Jean (almost a baby)

gazed in silent rapture at the cows down in the meadow. He named the cats: Fraulein, Stray Kit, Satan, Sourmash, and Blatherskite. He named the donkey, Kadichan, and he endeavored to take it in hand when it balked with the helpless children. Clara tells that story in her book *My Father, Mark Twain*:

“ ‘I’ll make that creature do his work’, he said, in a tone that sounded almost like a boast, and up he jerked himself into the saddle. But Kadichan moved one great ear forward in visible protest, and dropping his head as he raised his hind legs ever so little, he deposited my father in the long grass in front of him ... Father’s bewildered expression ... as he lay in the grass, engraved an indelible picture in our minds. A DONKEY had got the best of our father!’ ”

This episode seems to have put everyone into the best of spirits, for Clara concluded “father said he was ‘more attracted to the donkey than ever before because the power to accompany an act of vengeance with so much grace and serenity proved the animal to be superhuman.’ ”

Typical Day

Let me try to describe to you a typical day for my uncle at Quarry Farm. After an early breakfast he was likely to join Mrs. Crane for a stroll and an animated visit in the garden. After that he began his work. To quote Clara again: “It was a bright picture to see him start off in the morning (in his white clothes) for his Study, with a quick, short step and a pile of papers under his arm. He often gave a little caper of delight as he left the house, and laughed one of his affectionate laughs. One knew that that was good-bye for the day.”

In the mid or late afternoon (Mark Twain rarely took any lunch—never, I think, when he was writing) he reappeared down the patch through the orchard. This time he had under his arm fresh manuscript pages of, perhaps, *Huckleberry Finn*, perhaps *Tom Sawyer*, or *Roughing It*, or *Life on the Mississippi*, or *The Prince and the Pauper* (for parts or all of these and many other books were written in the Study)—fresh manuscript pages which he would be reading aloud later in the evening for the greatly valued criticism of his wife and of Mr. and Mrs. Crane.

Awestruck Auditions

The long day of writing usually had been uninterrupted, but when Mark Twain was at work on *The Prince and the Pauper* there were frequent gatherings on the Study steps that did perhaps amount to inter-

ruptions, but welcome ones. The children, sometimes accompanied by their cousins or friends from the town, by pre-arrangement with their father would come trooping silently into the “quiet zone” maintained around the little octagon late in the afternoon. If he were ready for them he would call out (sometimes they were not just on the spot, and he blew a horn for them) and in breathless excitement, they would gather around him to hear the newest chapter of this story that they passionately loved. Its characters were real to them, their fortunes and misfortunes of vital concern. They poured out suggestions to which Mark Twain listened with intense interest, certainly at times with considerable amusement. I do not know how many of them he adopted, but some I am sure, for this was, in his own words, “a yarn for youth,” and here was an audience whose reactions he felt were of first-rate importance to him. (Visualize this charming scene—this assemblage of the author and his youthful critics sometime when you pass the Study steps.)

One annual celebration brought the whole Quarry Farm household down the hill together—my grandmother’s birthday party in August. Mark Twain looked forward to this event as eagerly as did the children, and helped in the preparation of a program, possibly musical but more often theatrical in form. I remember one of these parties vividly. My sister had written a little romantic comedy, really no more than a dramatic dialogue in the manner of Austin Dobson’s *Vignettes in Rhyme*. Jean Clemens and I were to play its two parts, she as a fairy-tale prince, I as a milkmaid. My uncle, who was very fond of amateur theatricals, was to coach us! “On such occasions,” writes Clara in connection with this very event, “Father was touchingly considerate and sympathetic with author and actors when trouble arose with the stage settings (or other details of production) ... and took our affairs as seriously as if we were renowned artists accepted by the world.” We were to give the dialogue before my grandmother at the end of her long drawing room, and trouble did arise with the stage directions. The prince and the milkmaid had to meet ‘in a flowery meadow,’ she from the opposite, “along a narrow path.” For the Prince it was easy going: he entered through the double doors from the hall. But for the milkmaid there apparently was no approach except down through the audience. Not to be thought of! It would have marred the symmetry, upset the nice balance of the little scene, and probably broken my sister’s heart. My uncle surveyed this problem with concern for a moment; then speedily solved it thus: “Boost the milkmaid in through the window exactly opposite the hall door,” he said. “I’ll help.”

And so after some fighting together with a huge syringa bush and a lot of boosting and shoving of me in which he did assist, I was enabled, if not to glide onto the stage, certainly to make a striking entrance, and to meet the prince head on as was required by my sister's stage directions.

Mark Twain's Neighbors

In the town of Elmira Mark Twain had many friends and many interests. He was a familiar figure along the streets in his snowy white clothes. Very often he walked both ways from Farm to City and from City back to Farm. He enjoyed chatting with some very special friends who lived along the hill road, among them the Beechers and Dr. and Mrs. Gleason who managed the famous old Water Cure. Frequently he was going to his mother-in-law's house. I can dimly recall his appearances there at lunch time. That they were unannounced made no difference, for, as I have said, he seldom ate lunch, and would barely have taken a sort of token seat at the table before he sprang up and began to pace the floor, gesticulating with his napkin and telling stories. I remember how the elder members of my family would break into peals of laughter in which I heartily joined without the slightest understanding of what was going on, but with sympathetic delight in the general atmosphere, and a sense that Uncle Sam was certainly "being funny."



Elmira Water-Cure

Mr. Clemens loved billiards, and in Elmira he found many congenial friends to join him in the game. They played at the Old Century Club or at the Langdon home. He was fond of checkers and of all sorts of card games—cribbage, pinochle, whist, and a special favorite, bezique. It is said that he played bezique primarily to enjoy his own comments on the alliances and misalliances of the Kings, Queens, and Knives in the deck—comments that annoyed the more earnest of his fellow-players, but provided great hilarity for those able to take their cards lightly.

Monument to Adam

Mark Twain enjoyed association with the newspaper men of the town. He dropped in at the editorial offices to gossip now and again, and he contributed an occasional article or letter to *The Advertiser*, I believe. Once in a while he was prevailed upon to introduce a distinguished speaker who had come to lecture or deliver an old-fashioned political oration in town. But his principal civic effort in Elmira's behalf—to promote its urban beauty and its fame, was to have a monument to *Adam* (!) erected in our midst. He heard of a proposal, jestingly made by Mr. F. G. Hall, one of Elmira's leading citizens, that something of this sort should be done, and was greatly excited by the idea. He began, I suppose we should say, to rationalize it at once. To Mr. Beecher he observed that the human race really showed a pretty low regard for its great progenitor who was about to be deposed by Darwin's Simian. "Mankind," he said, "would probably accept the monkey ancestor, and the very name of Adam would be forgotten." Somebody ought to do something. He professed to think that a monument might accomplish a great deal to prevent any such regrettable rift between science and religion, and at the same time rectify an injustice. Those to whom he appealed (including Mr. Beecher!) agreed that there were some excellent reasons for the erection of a monument to Adam and a subscription was started for the purpose. Certain businessmen, seeing an opportunity for promoting both Elmira and Adam "semi-seriously" took the matter up, and offered to make generous contributions. It was then agreed that Congress be petitioned to "sanction the idea exclusively to Elmira." A document to this effect was drawn, and signed by Mr. F. G. Hall and ninety-three other prominent men. Just at this point it seems that General Joe Hawley came along on a political speech-making tour. Mark Twain was asked to introduce him, whereupon General Hawley in return for that courtesy and certainly in a reckless moment agreed to "father the petition in Congress." The un-

dertaking appeared to be off to a good start. But the poor man, so the story goes, was no sooner out of town than he began to realize what he had promised to do. He could not sleep at night. He walked the floor. He knew what a national laugh the petition would arouse, what jeers of mirth in the newspapers at both the petition and its sponsor. He could not make himself present the thing. He let one session of Congress after the other go by, and finally three years after he had got himself into the fix he contrived to get himself out by returning the document to Mark Twain through an intermediary, and himself going hastily to Europe.

That was the end of that effort to be of service to the town. But I ask you to reflect what Elmira might have owed to Mark Twain, if all had gone well. ADAM might have completed the decor of the west side of Wisner Park, and balanced off Mr. Beecher, the Spanish War Veteran, and that large white urn.

And now for a final story back in the setting of Quarry Farm. The many summers on the hill top merged in retrospect. The place did not change very much from year to year, nor did the life there. Vines covered the study and wild roses climbed to its window sills. The children's interests altered a little, Jean did not require her father to spend so much time with her gazing at the cows; the donkey was replaced by saddle horses that did not balk; the other children did more studying and serious reading—but the pattern of country life stayed much the same and continued to satisfy them all.

Some summers, however, were marked by special events and so stood out and were referred to as the summer the young and as yet unknown Rudyard Kipling appeared at the door with Allahabad on his calling card, or the summer that "Old Lewis" stopped the runaway. That story is my last.

In Mrs. Crane's household there were a number of negro servants, among them one (the cook) called Aunty Cord. She came from Virginia, and she had twice been sold as a slave. And working on the farm was another ex-slave named Lewis—John T. Lewis. He had a few acres of his own in the valley back of Quarry Farm where he concentrated on a private enterprise; he raised pigs. These two, "Auntie Cord" and "Old Lewis," as he was always spoken of, furnished Mr. Clemens with endless interest and pleasure, one of the many reasons being, I am afraid, that they were not always in complete harmony. "Auntie Cord" was an ignorant and dogmatic Methodist, (just here I am borrowing a word or two from Mr. Paine), Lewis was a Dunkard. He could read and

he was intelligent. The two disagreed on religion, and there were frequent heated discussions in the kitchen. These gave a sort of unholy delight to Mark Twain. He would come quietly within hearing distance to listen. When the altercation rose to a pitch and went beyond the hurling of epithets into the hurling of crockery, tinware, even, it is said (M. T. said) of dressed poultry, which "Auntie Cord" was preparing for the oven, Mark Twain quietly withdrew in a state of satisfaction.

"Old Lewis" was the hero of the runaway story. Instead of narrating this story to you, I am going to let my uncle tell it as he told it in a letter to his very dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. William Dean Howells... .

Elmira, August 25 & 26 - 77

My Dear Howellses: —

I thought I ought to make a sort of record of it for future reference; the pleasantest way to do that would be to write it to somebody. But that somebody would let it leak into print, & that we wish to avoid. The Howellses would be safe—so let us tell the Howellses about it.

Day before yesterday was a fine summer day away up here on the summit. Aunt Marsh and Cousin May Marsh were here visiting Susie Crane & Livy at our farm house. By & by Mother Langdon came up the hill in the "high carriage," with Nora the nurse & little Jervis (Charley Langdon's little boy)—Timothy the coachman driving. Behind them came Charley's wife & little girl in the buggy, with the new, young, spry gray horse—a high-stepper. Theodore Crane arrived a little later.

The Bay (the nickname of Clara, the baby of Mark Twain's family) & Susie were on hand with their nurse, Rose. I was on hand too, Susie Crane's trio of colored servants ditto, these being Jose, the housemaid; Auntie Cord, cook, aged 62, turbaned, very tall, very broad, very fine in every way; Chocklate, the laundress, (as Bay calls her, she can't say Charlotte), still taller, still more majestic of proportions, turbaned, very black, straight as an Indian—age 24. Then there was the farmer's wife (colored) & her little girl, Susie.

Lewis was still down town, three miles away, with his two-horse wagon, to get a load of manure. Lewis is the farmer (colored). He is of mighty frame & muscle, stocky, stooping, ungainly, has a good manly face & clear eye. Aged about 45, & the most picturesque of men, when he sits in his fluttering work-day rags, humped forward into a bunch, with his slouched hat mashed over his ears & neck. It is a spectacle to make the broken hearted smile.

Lewis has worked mighty hard & remained mighty poor. At the end of each whole year's toil he can't show a gain of fifty dollars. He had borrowed money of the Crane's till he owed them \$700—& he being conscientious & honest—imagine what it was to him to have to carry this stubborn hopeless load year in & year out.

Well, sunset came & Ida the young & comely (Charley Langdon's wife), her little Julia & the nurse Nora drove out at the gate behind the new gray horse & started down the hill—the high carriage receiving its load under the porte-cochere. Ida was seen to turn her face toward us across the fence & intervening lawn. Theodore waved good-by to her, for he did not know that her sign was a speechless appeal for help.

The next moment Livy said “Ida's driving too fast down hill!” She followed it with a short scream “Her horse is running away!”

We could see two hundred yards down the descent. The buggy seemed to fly. It would strike obstructions & apparently spring the height of a man from the ground. Theodore & I left the shrieking crowd behind & ran down the hill bareheaded & shouting. A neighbor appeared at his gate—a tenth of a second too late! The buggy vanished past him like a thought. My last glimpse showed it for one instant, far down the descent, springing high in the air, out of a cloud of dust, & then it disappeared. As I flew down the road, my impulse was to shut my eyes & so delay for a moment the ghastly spectacle of mutilation & death I was expecting.

I ran on & on, still spared this spectacle, but saying to myself “I shall see it at the turn of the road; they can never pass that turn alive.” When I came in sight of that turn, I saw two wagons there bunched together—one of them full of people. I said “Just so—they are staring petrified at the remains.”

But when I got amongst that bunch—there sat Ida in her buggy & nobody hurt, not even the horse or the vehicle. Ida was pale but serene. As I came tearing down she smiled back over her shoulder at me & said, “Well, we're **alive** yet, **aren't** we?” A miracle had been performed—nothing less.

You see, Lewis, the prodigious, humped upon his front seat, had been toiling up on his load of manure; he saw the frantic horse plunging down the hill toward him, on a full gallop, throwing his heels as high as a man's head at every jump. So Lewis turned his team diagonally across the road just at the turn thus making a V with the fence—the running horse could not escape but must enter it—then Lewis sprang to the ground &

stood in this V. He gathered his vast strength & seized the gray horse's bit as he plunged by, & fetched him up standing.

It was down hill mind you, ten feet **further** down hill neither Lewis nor any other man could have saved them, for they would have been on the abrupt "turn" then. But how this miracle was ever accomplished at all, by human strength, generalship, & accuracy, is clear beyond my comprehension, & grows more so the more I go & examine the ground & try to believe it was actually done. I know one thing, well; if Lewis had missed his aim he would have been killed on the spot in the trap he had made for himself, & we should have found the rest of the remains away down at the bottom of the steep ravine. Then minutes later Theodore & I arrived opposite the house, with the servants straggling after us, & shouted to the distracted group on the porch, "Everybody safe!"

Believe it? Why how **could** they? They knew the road perfectly, we might as well have said it to people who have seen their friends go over Niagara. However, we convinced them; then instead of saying something, or going on crying, they grew very still—words could not express it, I suppose.

Nobody could do anything that night, or sleep either; but there was a deal of moving talk, with long pauses between—pictures of that flying carriage, those pauses represented—this picture intruded itself all the time, & disjoined the talk.

But yesterday evening, late, when Lewis arrived from down town he found his supper spread, & some presents of books there, with very complimentary writings on the fly-leaves, & certain very complimentary letters & more or less greenbacks of dignified denomination pinned to these letters & fly-leaves,—& one said, among other things, (signed by the Cranes) "we cancel \$400 of your indebtedness to us," etc., etc.

The supper room had been kept locked & imposingly secret & mysterious until Lewis should arrive; but around that part of the house were gathered Lewis' wife & child, Chocklate, Jose, Aunty Cord, & our Rosa, canvassing things & waiting impatiently,—they were all on hand when the curtain rose.

Now Aunty Cord is a violent Methodist & Lewis an implacable Dunker-Baptist. These two are inveterate religious disputants. The revelation having been made, Aunty Cord said with effusion—

"**Now** let folks go on saying there ain't no God! Lewis, the Lord sent you there to stop that horse."

Says Lewis —

“Then who sent the **horse** there in sich a shape?”

But I want to call your attention to one thing. When Lewis arrived the other evening, after saving those lives by a feat which I think is the most marvelous of any I can call to mind—when he arrived, hunched upon his manure wagon & as grotesquely picturesque as usual, everybody wanted to go & see how he looked. They came back & said he was beautiful. It was **so**, too—& yet he would have **photographed** exactly as he would have done any day these past 7 years, that he has occupied this farm.

FLAG

I edited this as original, correction was incorrect

P.S. Our little romance in real life is happily and satisfactorily completed.

It has been known, during some years, that it was Lewis’s purpose to buy a thirty dollar silver watch some day, if he ever got where he could afford it. To-day Ida has given him a new, sumptuous gold Swiss stem-winding stop-watch; if any scoffer shall say “Behold this thing is out of character,” there is an inscription within, which will silence him; for it will teach him that this wearer aggrandizes the watch, not the watch the wearer.

I was asked beforehand if this would be a wise gift, & I said “Yes, the very wisest of all; I know that in Lewis’s eyes this fine toy will throw the other more valuable testimonials far away into the shade. If he lived in England, the Humane Society would give him a gold medal as costly as this watch, & nobody would say ‘It is out of character.’

If Lewis chose to wear a town clock who would become it better?

Lewis has sound common sense & is not going to be spoiled. The instant he found himself possessed of money, he forgot himself in a plan to make his old father comfortable, who is wretchedly poor & lives down in Maryland. His next act, on the spot, was to proffer to the Cranes of the \$300 of his remaining indebtedness to them. This was put off by them to the indefinite future, for he is not going to be allowed to pay that at all, though he doesn’t know it.

A letter of acknowledgement from Lewis contains a sentence which raises it to the dignity of literature;

“But I beg to say, humbly, that in as much as divine providence saw fit to use me as a instrument for the saving of those presshious lives, the honnor conferd upon me was greater than the feat performed”—

That is well said.

Yours ever,
Mark

Last Long Visit

The last long visit at Quarry Farm was in 1903. After that Mr. Clemens' returns to Elmira were sad and brief. One by one he lost the beloved members of his family (only his daughter Clara survives him) and came here to "Livy's" old home for their funeral services. In the spring of 1910 his own death occurred. After a service in New York City at the Brick Church, at which Dr. Henry Van Dyke and the Rev. Joseph Twichell officiated, Mr. Clemens' body was brought back to the house where he had been married, and lay there briefly. Many persons from all callings came to pay him honor. Mr. Paine's words at the end of his sensitive biography, I shall do very well to quote:

"That night (the night following the service in New York City) we went with him to Elmira, and next day ... he lay in those stately parlors that had seen his wedding-day, and where Susy had lain, and Mrs. Clemens, and Jean, while Dr. Eastman of the Park Church spoke the words of peace which separate us from our mortal dead. Then in the quiet, steady rain of that Sunday afternoon, we laid him beside those others, where he sleeps well—though some have wished that, like DeSoto, he might have been laid to rest in the bed of that great river which must always be associated with his name."

My uncle would not have been one of those. I know that he would have said that the happiest days of his life and among the most productive, were those spent in Elmira. It was beyond question that he should return to Elmira in the end.

Chapter Four

Lectures in Elmira

Like many authors of his day, Mark Twain was as famous as a performer on the lecture circuit as he was a writer. In fact, a major part of his income was as a lecturer. The two occupations went hand in hand; the books and articles helped to create an audience for the lectures, and the lectures helped to sell the books. Unlike many authors, who only read selections from their works, Mark Twain's performances consisted of anecdotes and extemporaneous comments that varied with the audience as well as standard stories, tales and dramatic readings from his writings.

In Mark Twain's forty-two year association with Elmira, he seems to have given only two public lectures in the city (1868 and 1884), three performances at the Elmira Reformatory (1886, 1888 and 1895), and two other public appearances at which he spoke (1879 and 1907).

Mark Twain's most successful lectures in Elmira were not available to the general public; they were given in the Elmira Reformatory. Mark Twain found the Reformatory audience highly satisfactory and his appearances there gave him opportunities to practice his material. He also liked the superintendent, Zebulon R. Brockway, whose ideas on penology included entertainment for the men in the Reformatory. His description of the Reformatory audience is vintage Twain humor:

The Elmira Reformatory contains 850 convicts, who are there for all manner of crimes. People go there and lecture, read, or make speeches, and come away surprised and delighted. They can't understand it. They have astonished themselves by the excellence of their own performance.

They can't remember to have ever done so well before. Afterwards, they always say that for a splendid audience give them a houseful of convicts; it's the best audience in the world. They puzzle and puzzle over it and are not able to get away from the apparently established fact that an audience of convicts is

the most intelligent and appreciative in the world. Which is all a mistake. The whole secret lies in the absence of ladies. Any 850 men would be just as inspiring, where no dampening female person was in sight, with her heartful of emotions and her determined repression, choking it down and keeping signs of it from showing on the outside.

Mark Twain gave a performance at the Elmira Reformatory on July 21, 1886, using the sketches "German," "Whistling," "Trying Situation," and "King Sollermann." On September 11, 1888, he gave a reading, the text of which was not recorded.

In 1895, the Clemens family was in desperate financial straits. Mark's unsuccessful investment in a typesetting machine and the failure of his publishing company had not only taken all of his money, but had cut into Livy's inheritance. The financial Panic of 1873 had cut the income from her investments and had caused Mark's royalties to almost disappear. From June, 1891, to May, 1895, the family lived in Europe, closing the Hartford house to save expenses. Determined to pay off a debt of almost \$100,000, Mark Twain decided to go back to the lecture circuit with a tour around the world. The family returned to Elmira to make the preparations.

On May 26, 1895, he wrote from Elmira to his friend, Henry H. Rogers, who was helping him extricate himself from his financial problems, "We leave for the hill-top [Quarry Farm] tomorrow, and then I shall begin at once and work ten or twelve hours a day—half the time on Joan, Book III, and the other half on my three readings: thus shifting the burden back and forth and resting both shoulders. I have already arranged to begin about a week from now and practice the 3 readings once and perhaps twice on the convicts at the Reformatory—twice, is my intention; next I am to go to Ithaca and practice them on the Cornell students. This ... will put me in fairly good shape for the platform."

Unfortunately, a painful carbuncle, which kept him in bed for more than six weeks, and legal difficulties, caused by his creditors, prevented him from practicing his lecture as he planned. He gave what he felt was a most unsatisfactory rehearsal at the Randall's Island House of Refuge while in New York City for a court hearing, but his performance at the Elmira Reformatory on Sunday evening, July 14, was, as he wrote, "a roaring success." After the Randall Island disaster, he discarded the plan for the lecture, and wrote, "I've ... invented a totally different plan, and I think a pretty good one. I'm going to try it on the Reformatory convicts to-night. I shall feel freer—in fact unhampered—because I shan't

memorize what I call the lecture part, but deliver it extempore. I know the substance of what I wish to say, and will ... choose the wording for it as I go along.”

Professor Fred W. Lorch, in his article, “Mark Twain’s ‘Moral’ Lecture during the American Phase of His World Tour in 1895-1896,” *American Literature*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (March, 1954), quoted from the prison newspaper, *Summary*, July 21, that “many in the audience were on the verge of apoplexy” as they listened to the famous humorist. Mark, accompanied by Livy and Clara, left Elmira later that evening for Cleveland. Susy and Jean were left with Aunt Sue at Quarry Farm. The tour, which took the celebrated lecturer to the major English-speaking countries around the world, delighted audiences in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Ceylon, and South Africa, and was a financial success that enabled him to pay off all of his creditors at one hundred cents on the dollar.

In 1896, with the lecture tour over, Mark Twain was waiting in England for the rest of the family to join him when he received word of the death of his beloved daughter, Susy. After that, Elmira saw little of the Clemens family. Mark Twain attended the wedding of his niece, Julia Olivia Langdon, to Edward E. Loomis in Elmira on November 29, 1902. The newspaper reported that “Many citizens of Elmira were glad of the opportunity to shake hands with the venerable Samuel L. Clemens, who for a time stood beside the handsome bride while receiving the guests.”

The famous author’s final public appearance in Elmira was at the Park Church on April 3, 1907, for the dedication of the Hope-Jones organ. It was not as a visiting lecturer or public speaker that Elmirans remember Mark Twain, but as a neighbor and friend.



The Elmira Reformatory

The Lecture Season

Mark Twain and the American Vandal

On November 23, 1868, Mark Twain made his first public appearance in Elmira, speaking on "The American Vandal Abroad." He gave the lecture, based on the Quaker City cruise, many times during 1868 and 1869, usually receiving a \$100.00 fee, as well as promoting his forthcoming book, *The Innocents Abroad*. The Elmira appearance was a benefit, however, for the Volunteer Fire Company, "OURS HOSE CO. NO. 4", in which Charles J. Langdon, his future brother-in-law, was an active member. With general admission at fifty cents, the first row of the balcony at seventy-five cents, and the gallery at thirty-five cents, the Opera House was well filled, but not crowded.

Mark Twain was not pleased with what he called his "lame delivery", although he was nervous because Livy was in the audience. In a letter to her from Ottawa, Illinois, nearly two months later, he recalled the Elmira experience: "My Dearest Livy—Another botch of a lecture!—even worse than Elmira, I think They say I didn't botch it, but I should think I ought to know. I closed with a fervent apology for my failure, just as I did in Elmira—& the apology was the only thing in the lecture that had any life or any feeling in it." The lecture in Elmira did play a part in Mark Twain's courtship of Livy. He reported to a friend that she felt the first symptom of love for him on Sunday and that the lecture on Monday night "brought the disease to the surface." Two days later she admitted that she loved him and he was in high spirits when he left Elmira on Friday to return to the lecture circuit.

The following review in the Elmira Weekly Advertiser was restrained; certainly not enthusiastic. It had little to say about the content of the lecture.

The evening following Monday the twenty-third day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, was a very beautiful one. It neither rained nor snowed, but it was an evening long to be remembered for its beauty and for its brightness. It will, however, be remembered, not alone for its beauty and its brightness, but the members of "Ours" 4, will particularly remember it as the evening in which Mr. Samuel L. Clemens, known all over the land as "Mark Twain," delivered a lecture at the Opera House for their benefit.

The Opera House was well filled, although a larger audience might have been accommodated, and interested and amused. The lecturer was not in good voice, and the first impression was that he was not going to be heard by the audience, and the next impression, which followed close upon the first, was that he was not going to sustain, as a lecturer, the reputation which he has acquired as a writer. Both impressions however soon gave way to others more pleasing and satisfactory, and as the lecturer proceeded in his vandalism, (which, as used by him, was but another name for travels,) he made his “mark” frequently and often upon the minds and feelings of his hearers, as was evidenced by their hearty laughter and applause.

The lecture was well received throughout, and contained many quaint utterances and funny incidents. The lecturer made allusion to many of his distinguished “personal friends,” and interspersed his lecture with the recital of the characteristics of his harmless American Vandal in his travels in foreign lands. At other times he would carry us on the wings of his redundant fancy away to the ruins, the cathedrals and the monuments of the old world. At such times we knew not which most to admire, his eloquence or his humor.

As a whole the lecture was pleasing, and the audience were [sic.] satisfied. We congratulate the lecturer upon the success of his lecture, and we congratulate “Ours” 4, upon the success of their enterprise.

General Hawley’s Meeting Grand Republican Demonstration The Opera House Filled Mark Twain and General Hawley on the Stump

Not until more than ten years later did Mark Twain again appear on a platform in Elmira. Now world famous and with his Elmira connection firmly established, he attracted headlines by agreeing to appear in a Republican rally featuring General Joseph R. Hawley, a friend and neighbor from Hartford. General Hawley, a newspaper editor who rose from captain to brevet major general in the Civil War, was a former governor of Connecticut, had been president of the United States Centennial Commission, and was then a member of the United States House of Representatives. He was a leading Republican who was considered one of the party’s most effective political speakers. Mark Twain’s appear-

ance in such a partisan role was almost certainly because of loyalty to Charles J. Langdon, a stalwart Republican who, as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1876, had held out to the end for the renomination of President Grant for a third term. This rally was on behalf of the Republican candidate for Governor, Alonzo B. Cornell, who was running against the incumbent Democrat, Lucius Robinson of Elmira. Cornell won the election.

The meeting was held in the Elmira Opera House on October 18, 1879. The Elmira Daily Advertiser gave a verbatim account of the speeches. General Hawley's speech is not included here.

Last Saturday evening the citizens of Elmira and vicinity assembled in large numbers in the Opera House. The threatenings of rain doubtless kept many away who otherwise would have attended. The Opera House was peopled by as fine an audience of ladies and gentlemen as ever gathered within its walls. Before the meeting a band of music played in front of the hall.

Upon the platform of the Opera House were, besides General Hawley and Mr. Mark Twain Samuel L. Clemens, Judge McMaster, of Bath, General Gregg, Chairman of the County Committee, General Diven, Rev. Dr. Knox, and other prominent Republicans.

Promptly at eight o'clock Mr. Clemens—no, Mark Twain,—it seems as though he ought to be called Mark Twain. Mark Twain it is who makes all the funny speeches and writes the funny books. Mr. Clemens may back him in it, but Mark Twain does all the hard work,—therefore it is we report that Mark advanced boldly to the footlights, (which were not lit), and looked at the audience a moment as if looking for someone. But he wasn't, only trying to overcome his emotions. As he arose the audience encouraged him by generous applause and Mark proceeded to introduce Gen. Hawley, his friend and neighbor in Hartford. We report him just as he said it, but the type founders do not make characters that can draw and intone on paper. He spoke as follows:

MARK TWAIN ON GENERAL HAWLEY:

I see I am advertised to introduce the speaker of the evening, Gen. Hawley, of Connecticut, and I see it is the report that I am to make a political speech. Now I must say that this is an error. Nor is it necessary. Ohio made my speech for me the other day. (Applause.) I wasn't constructed to make speeches, on and that head—politics—I have only this to say: First,—See that you vote. Second,—See that your neighbor

votes. Lastly—See that yourself or your neighbor don't scratch the ticket. (Applause.)

Introducing you to Gen. Joseph R. Hawley, Member of Congress, late President of the Centennial Commission, formerly a General in the army, once a Governor of Connecticut, Chairman of the Chicago Convention which nominated Mr. Lincoln.—Gen. Hawley, (interrupting),—It was Gen. Grant, Mr. Clemens. Mark Twain, (continuing),—Gen. Hawley says it was Gen. Grant, but I know better. It was Abraham Lincoln.

The audience laughed long and loud, and three times broke out in a fresh spell at the absurdity of Mark knowing more about it than General Hawley.

Continuing as if nothing had happened:—head of an excellent newspaper, member of my church in Hartford, (laughter), author of "Beautiful Snow," (uproarious laughter), it is not my province to enlarge upon matters general. I am here simply to give him a character from his last place. (Laughter.)

As a fellow-townsmen and dutiful citizen, I have high respect for him; as a personal friend of long standing, I have a warm regard for him; as a neighbor, whose vegetable garden adjoins my own, I watch him. (Laughter.) But that is nothing, we all do that with our neighbors. General Hawley is a man who keeps his promises; he is a man who always speaks the truth, not only in private life, but in politics; he is an editor who believes what he says in his own newspaper; as author of "Beautiful Snow," he has given us a poem which has added a new pang to winter, (Laughter); the public honor, public moneys, church property, anything and all things that are strictly public, are safe in his hands. I have watched him many a time, as the contribution box went by, and I — well, I never saw him take anything out of it. (Contagious laughter, including Gen. Hawley.) Charity, compassion, and benevolence are inborn in General Hawley; he never sends the tramp empty from his door, but gives him a note of introduction to me. (Laughter.) But above all, and beyond all, it can be said with entire sincerity, that he is a square, honest man,—a square, honest, man in politics, think of that,—and I will remark here, in confidence, that he occupies an almighty lonesome position.—(Applause and laughter.)

General Hawley's public aspect is as creditable as his private one. As a member of Congress he has upheld our excellent President's hands (Applause), his voice and his vote have always been for the best good of his

country, considerations of self have never influenced his policy, he has never backed down before a responsibility, nor dodged one. As a citizen of the Republic he is without reproach; in his faith in her institutions, in his pride in her greatness, in his affection for her and belief in her high destiny, he is an American of the Americans. (Applause.) As president of the Centennial Commission he carried through and brought to a successful issue which has borne the fame of our resources and industries to far regions, and made our country a respectful competitor where her rivalry was of little moment before. As Governor of his state, he governed well and righteously; as a soldier he earned enduring praise and honor. His public trusts have been many and varied; his record, in them all, is wholly without stain. He is a man, against whose honor and high principle, not a word can be spoken. The presence of such a man in politics is like a vase of attar of roses in a glue factory—it can not extinguish the stench, but it modifies it. (Laughter and applause.)

In what I have been saying about General Hawley I have not meant to flatter, but only to speak the plain and simple truth (Laughter.); I have not said anything about him which I would not say about myself. (Laughter.)

Twain and Cable

An Audience of Refined and Educated People Well Entertained Last Night.

Mark Twain's next public appearance in Elmira came five years later and was part of a four-month tour that included more than a hundred appearances in about eighty cities. It was the only strictly commercial lecture in the city.

In 1884-85, Mark Twain teamed up with George Washington Cable, a Southern regional author, for a lecture tour of "readings" from their works. Cable read from his novel, Dr. Sevier, but Mark Twain quickly gave up reading his work and memorized the selections he gave, also telling some of his old stories, all without notes. As the tour progressed, the dissimilarity between the sociable, open-handed Twain and the prim, parsimonious Cable, whose observation of

the Sabbath approached fanaticism, placed a strain on the partnership. Their appearance in Elmira, however, on December 18, 1884, early in the tour, came before complaints about Cable's idiosyncrasies had begun to dominate Mark's letters to Livy.

The program, held in the same Elmira Opera House where Mark Twain had lectured sixteen years earlier, was announced as four readings by Cable from Dr. Sevier and four selections by Mark Twain. One of these was the "King Sollermun" episode from Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, just written and soon to be published. The program concluded with Mark Twain's famous ghost story. The lecture was reviewed in the Elmira Daily Advertiser of December 19, 1884.

The extreme cold weather kept many away from the opera house last evening. Though the audience was not large it was composed of the most refined and intellectual people of the city. Both the authors were received with applause promptly at 8 o'clock. Mr. Clemens introducing Mr. Cable as one of the parties to the "moral and literary conspiracy." Mr. Cable, a man of very slight frame and dark beard, first recited entertainingly the visit of the borrowing Narcisse, in "Dr. Sevier," with John and Mary Richling, carrying on the three-cornered conversation admirably. Mark Twain's story of "King Sollermun" from "Huckleberry Finn" was a droll dialogue, and striking for the reason that the extravagant talk is characteristic of ignorant boys. The "Trying Situation" was a good story of Twain's meeting a young woman who knew him, and, not to be outdone, he pretended to know her. The embarrassments resulting were many. In response to a recall, he told of the man who was cured of stammering. There was a roar of laughter with every line. Mr. Cable is very different from his companion. He pictures vividly all that he undertakes to describe. His impersonation of Ristofalo, the "Eye-tal-yun" lover of Kate Riley, was done to perfection. Mr. Cable substituted two songs in place of one of the parts in the printed program, one a Creole love song and the other an African legendary song of a mother mourning for her lost child. He has a well-trained tenor voice and sings in a manner original and peculiar yet in a way that charms one's ear. His description of Mary's night's ride was dramatic and powerful. Mark Twain closed the program by a ghost story to which there was not much story, the principal feature being the jump at the close which startled everyone in the audience.

Mark Twain's Last Visit to Elmira

by W. Charles Barber

His final public appearance in Elmira was at the Park Church on April 3, 1907. The aging author made a few humorous remarks at a demonstration of a new organ there. The event was reported in the press and described by W. Charles Barber in an article in the Chemung Historical Journal, Vol. 12, No. 3 (March, 1967).

*From an address at the rededication service and recital of
The Beecher Memorial Organ, in the Park Church, March 5, 1961.*

... Mark Twain rocked this room with his humor the last time he was in Elmira. That was in April, 1907—a scant three years before his body was brought here to rejoin his heart which went into the grave in 1904 with the one dearest to him in all the world.

This sanctuary has known another great voice. The Beecher Memorial Organ, back in place now after many silent months... .

Two programs, each prominently headlined in Elmira newspapers, launched the Beecher organ on its harmonious journey. The organ was dedicated to the task of keeping green the memory of Thomas K. Beecher in this community—as though his memory needed anything to keep it green in a city that loves him still and counts him among the greatest blessings in its history more than six decades after his physical passing.

The first of these programs was on Dec. 6, 1906, when the instrument, described by *The Advertiser* as the “most complete of American organs,” was dedicated to a ministry of 46 years carried on by a man who was never installed as this church’s minister. He was too busy, I guess.

This truly remarkable instrument was built by Ernest M. Skinner under the direction of Robert Hope-Jones. It was the product of their craftsmanship and Hope-Jones’ willingness to conquer new realms in organ-building. The newspapers of the day used almost a column of type to list the pipes and other things that made up the Beecher instrument.

The noted John Daulby Peake played the dedicatory program and Anna Laura Johnson, the contralto whose voice some of us can still

hear in memory, sang. The program ended with “How Firm a Foundation,” the hymn that Beecher sang with his people in this room at the last service he led early in March, 1900. *The Advertiser*, commenting on the excellence of the program, declared that a “pin dropped in the house would have been distinctly heard.”

The 1907 Recital

It was on April 3, 1907, nearly 54 years ago, that this instrument was put through its melodic paces for probably the most critical audience that could be assembled—a group of New York’s leading organists. They came to Elmira in a special car on the Lackawanna... .

The 1907 recital was the idea of Jervis Langdon who had an interest in the Hope-Jones concern as well as an interest in the affairs of this church. It was his theory, if you will excuse a bad pun or two, that if someone of note added tone to the occasion, it might help peddle an organ or two and provide some spirited and welcome music for the men at the business console. The someone he had in mind was his Uncle Sam Clemens, also a Hope-Jones stockholder, along with J. Sloat Fassett, Charles J. Langdon, John B. Stanchfield—to mention a few. Mr. Langdon was right, both about the drawing power of the famous Beecher organ and the magnetism of his distinguished Uncle Sam.

And so, Uncle Sam came to Elmira on April 2 and the newspapers announced that Mark Twain was in town and interviewed him and printed his picture... .

It was Mark Twain’s last visit to Elmira. For him life had grown hollow and sorrow-filled. But, for all the burden he carried in his heart, Mark Twain continued to make the world laugh. He couldn’t help it. The gift of humor can be a heavy thing—how heavy no one in history knew better than Mark Twain.

Max Eastman, who was in the audience, has described how Mark Twain, handsome of face, his white hair a halo, made his way in his loping gait to this platform—or more accurately the one that preceded it—to convulse the organists with a typical Mark Twain speech.

Mark Twain’s Speech

Here’s what he said as reported in *The Advertiser*, whose columns had so often cackled and crackled and raised blisters with things from Mark Twain’s pen—and as recalled by Max Eastman, this being the best composite I can assemble from the two sources. The springboard for the

speech was a statement in Jervis Langdon's introduction that his love of music had been inspired in early childhood by hearing Mark Twain sing an old song, "Darby & Joan."

"Well now, Jervis," began Mark Twain, "I must emphatically deny that statement, for I never sang 'Darby & Joan.' Certainly I never sang it.

"Now, isn't imagination a precious thing? It peoples the earth with all manner of wonders, strange beasts and birds, angels, cherubim and seraphim. And it has to be exercised. No child should be permitted to grow up without exercise for the imagination. It enriches life for him. It makes things wonderful and beautiful. It awakens an interest in church organs and all sorts of things. You can see what it has done for Jervis just to sit on my knee and exercise his imagination. And so, now, looking back, I'm glad ... I **didn't** sing."

The promotional aspects of the occasion didn't escape Mark Twain's notice. One of the speakers was Zebulon R. Brockway, Mayor of Elmira, founder of the Reformatory and an Elmira booster of considerable vigor. In the audience, too, were John M. Connelly, president of the Chamber of Commerce, Secretary Roy Smith and others determined to put Elmira on the map.

"I must express my astonishment at Jervis," went on Mark Twain, "for taking advantage of this occasion and of you organists to advertise his new company. And I am astonished at my old friend, Mr. Brockway.

"Here he is boldly offering for sale the sites that he has got around here for country residences. Look at Mr. Brockway. You can't find a more benevolent, more kindly face anywhere around. This is plainly the effect of opposition. He has associated with criminals all his life, and look at what it's done for him. If I had associated with criminals I might have such a face, too, but I've always been associated with Christians.

"Now if you know of any man in your locality in need of an occupation, just send them down to Mr. Brockway and he'll fit them out with any trade or business from burglary clear over to political life."

A Long Pause

When he had finished, Mark Twain walked from the pulpit to the leaf doors at the southeast corner of the sanctuary and paused for a long moment, his eyes glinting under his shaggy brows as he looked across this big old room that Beecher's ministry had made great. It was a sentimental gesture and one typical of Mark Twain. Then, with a hand

that had set type from a printer's case and piloted steamboats up and down the Mississippi River—a hand that kings counted a privilege to grasp—he opened one of the doors and disappeared. The organists were still chuckling as he walked beside the church toward the Langdon home across Church St.

By exercising our imaginations in the manner so highly recommended by Mark Twain in his speech, we can fancy him thinking of his great friend Beecher as he surveyed this room before he left it for the last time. Perhaps he rolled back 38 years to the time when he sank Elmira Ministers' Union with a broadside in *The Advertiser* because Beecher's fellow ministers in an envious and witless moment had kicked him out to land eventually upon a pedestal in the park. This was the church in which gentle Olivia Langdon had grown up, loving it and its teachers as later she loved Mark Twain. Something of Livy remained in this auditorium for Mark Twain to sense and to cherish, be sure of that.

Of the voices nearly 54 years ago, only one remains so far as I know. It's the voice of the organ placed here in Beecher's memory because the people he loved and served and taught kept in their hearts the homely lessons he put before them. In a way, it substitutes for the voice that death silenced nearly 61 years ago. It is our link with the past, a true and loved friend that kept its dignity that day in 1907 when Mark Twain spoke—the one voice in the room that didn't laugh—the only one that couldn't.

Chapter Five

Monument to Adam

Mark Twain's sense of humor made him the author of a number of hoaxes which often were so cleverly done that they were taken seriously by a public used to believing what it read in the newspapers. One such hoax was the story of the Petrified Man; another was the "Massacre at Empire City." A joke that he concocted in Elmira was a plan to erect a monument to Adam, presented in the fall of 1879. Biblical stories fascinated Mark Twain and references to Adam crop up in his works from The Innocents Abroad, when he described his visit to the tomb of Adam, to his Adam's Diary and Eve's Diary.

It is not clear how many Elmirans took seriously the proposal to erect a monument to the "Father of the Human Race." A notice in the Elmira Daily Advertiser of December 3, 1879 had a tongue-in-cheek tone. "ADAM. Meeting of Citizens in Favor of a Monument. A meeting of responsible men of Elmira was held last evening at the banking rooms of F. G. Hall, Esq., in respect to the proposed monument to the great father of us all. Much earnestness was shown, and many necessary steps discussed at some length. As furthering the subject, a committee to correspond with prominent sculptors was appointed, and biding their action the meeting was adjourned, subject to the call of the chairman."

The officers of the Adam Monument Association of Elmira, according to a later news item, were Thomas K. Beecher, president; banker Mathias H. Arnot, vice president; F. G. Hall, treasurer; Dr. Theron A. Wales, recording secretary and Dr. Thaddeus S. UpdeGraff, corresponding secretary. The association had letterheads printed and promised, "The monument will rise. It only awaits approval of the model."

Ninety-four Elmirans, including the governor of New York, signed a petition to Congress composed by Mark Twain. All but six of these are identified here for the first time. The project died out when Mark Twain's good friend and neighbor from Hartford, General Joseph R. Hawley, then a member of Congress, decided the chance was too great that the joke would be taken seriously if he presented the petition to the House of Representatives.

A Monument to Adam

by Mark Twain

In 1906, Mark Twain recalled the Monument to Adam project in a short essay that follows. The essay may be found in Mark Twain, \$30,000 Bequest and Other Stories (New York: Mark Twain Company, 1917), pp. 234-236.

Some one has revealed to the *Tribune* that I once suggested to Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, of Elmira, New York, that we get up a monument to Adam, and that Mr. Beecher favored the project. There is more to it than that. The matter started as a joke, but it came somewhat near to materializing.

It is long ago—thirty years. Mr. Darwin's *Descent of Man* had been in print five or six years, and the storm of indignation raised by it was still raging in pulpits and periodicals. In tracing the genesis of the human race back to its sources, Mr. Darwin had left Adam out altogether. We had monkeys, and "missing links," and plenty of other kinds of ancestors, but no Adam. Jestings with Mr. Beecher and other friends in Elmira, I said there seemed to be a likelihood that the world would discard Adam and accept the monkey, and that in the course of time Adam's very name would be forgotten in the earth; therefore this calamity ought to be averted; a monument would accomplish this, and Elmira ought not to waste this honorable opportunity to do Adam a favor and herself a credit.

Then the unexpected happened. Two bankers came forward and took hold of the matter—not for fun, not for sentiment, but because they saw in the monument certain commercial advantages for the town. The project had seemed gently humorous before—it was more than that now, with this stern business gravity injected into it. The bankers discussed the monument with me. We met several times. They proposed an indestructible memorial, to cost twenty-five thousand dollars. The insane oddity of a monument set up in a village to preserve a name that would outlast the hills and the rocks without any such help, would advertise Elmira to the ends of the earth—and draw custom. It would be the only monument on the planet to Adam, and in the matter of interest and impressiveness could never have a rival until somebody should set up a monument to the Milky Way.

People would come from every corner of the globe and stop off to look at it, no tour of the world would be complete that left out Adam's monument. Elmira would be a Mecca; there would be pilgrim ships at pilgrim rates, pilgrim specials on the continent's railways; libraries would be written about the monument, every tourist would kodak it, models of it would be for sale everywhere in the earth, its form would become as familiar as the figure of Napoleon.

One of the bankers subscribed five thousand dollars, and I think the other one subscribed half as much, but I do not remember with certainty now whether that was the figure or not. We got designs made—some of them came from Paris.

In the beginning—as a detail of the project when it was as yet a joke—I had framed a humble and beseeching and perfervid petition to Congress begging the government to build the monument, as a testimony of the Great Republic's gratitude to the Father of the Human Race and as a token of her loyalty to him in this dark day of his humiliation when his older children were doubting him and deserting him. It seemed to me that this petition ought to be presented, now—it would be widely and feelingly abused and ridiculed and cursed, and would advertise our scheme and make our ground-floor stock go off briskly. So I sent it to General Joseph R. Hawley, who was then in the House, and he said he would present it. But he did not do it. I think he explained that when he came to read it he was afraid of it: it was too serious, too gushy, too sentimental—the House might take it for earnest.

We ought to have carried out our monument scheme; we could have managed it without any great difficulty, and Elmira would now be the most celebrated town in the universe.

Very recently I began to build a book in which one of the minor characters touches incidentally upon a project for a monument to Adam, and now the *Tribune* has come upon a trace of the forgotten jest of thirty years ago. Apparently mental telegraphy is still in business. It is odd; but the freaks of mental telegraphy are usually odd.

The Adam Monument Petition to The Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of The United States In Congress Assembled

The petition and list of signers is from Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain, a Biography (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1924), Vol. IV, pp. 1648-1650. The men who signed the petition (no women are included), were the political, economic and social leaders of the community. They included Governor Lucius Robinson, an Elmira resident; John Arnot, Jr., the first mayor of Elmira, from one of the city's richest families; and several others active in local and state government. The list contained bankers, doctors, newspapermen, and various tradesmen and businessmen. All but six names on the list have been identified.

WHEREAS, A number of citizens of the city of Elmira in the State of New York having covenanted among themselves to erect in that city a monument in memory of Adam, the father of mankind, being moved thereto by a sentiment of love and duty, and these having appointed the undersigned to communicate with your honorable body, we beg leave to lay before you the following facts and append to the same our humble petition.

1. As far as is known no monument has ever been raised in any part of the world to commemorate the services rendered to our race by this great man, whilst many men of far less note and worship have been rendered immortal by means of stately and indestructible memorials.
2. The common father of mankind has been suffered to lie in entire neglect, although even the Father of our Country has now, and has had for many years, a monument in course of construction.
3. No right-feeling human being can desire to see this neglect continued, but all just men, even to the farthest regions of the globe, should and will rejoice to know that he to whom we owe existence is about to have reverent and fitting recognition of his works at the hands of the people of Elmira. His labors were not in behalf of one locality, but for the extension of humanity at large and the blessings which go therewith; hence all races and all colors and all religions are interested in seeing that his name and fame shall be placed beyond the reach of the blight of oblivion by a permanent and suitable monument.
4. It will be to the imperishable credit of the United States if this monument shall be set up within her borders; moreover, it will be a peculiar

grace to the beneficiary if this testimonial of affection and gratitude shall be the gift of the youngest of the nations that have sprung from his loins after 6,000 years of unappreciation on the part of its elders.

5. The idea of this sacred enterprise having originated in the city of Elmira, she will be always grateful if the general government shall encourage her in the good work by securing to her a certain advantage through the exercise of its great authority.

Therefore, Your petitioners beg that your honorable body will be pleased to issue a decree restricting to Elmira the right to build a monument to Adam and inflicting a heavy penalty upon any other community within the United States that shall propose or attempt to erect a monument or other memorial to the said Adam, and to this end we will ever pray.

F. G. Hall
C. Preswick
Thad. S. Up de Graff
Thos. K. Beecher
John Arnot, Jr.
S. De Witt
W. F. Sherwin
S. T. Reynolds
Chas. J. Langdon
Henry E. Drake
Delos L. Holden
C. W. Brown
E. B. Smith
H. G. Gilbert
E. K. Waver [sic. Weaver]
Wm. H. Ferguson
William E. Hart
J. Richardson
J. D. Baldwin
D. Atwater
W. A. Ward
A. Wyckoff
Geo. W. Wyckoff
C. W. Wyckoff
F. T. Wyckoff
E. L. Wyckoff

M. H. Arnot
C. H. Thomson
Theron A. Wales
Wm. T. Post
Seymour Dexter
F. H. Atkinson
J. R. Reid
Ausburn Towner
J. H. Barney
R.R.R.Dumarz [sic. Dumars]
C. L. Harding
J. Hotchkiss [T.]
M. W. Palnue [sic. Palmer]
Peter Wright
L. A. Humphrey
G. A. Grinley [sic. Gridley]
H. M. Kent
T. C. Cowen
J. J. Bush
H. V. Ransom
A. S. Fitch
J. M. Sly
W. E. Shims [sic. Shives]
Wm. H. Frost
Chas. Hazard
Arthur Pratt

J. D. Slee	G. S. Dickinson
F. W. Crane [T.]	Geo. M. Robinson
W. H. Longstreet	E. P. Bement
R. W. McDowell	Lucius D. Robinson [sic. Lucius]
John Brand	Fred D. Hills
Wm. J. Sosmore [sic. Lormore]	Joseph J. Emerson
H. A. Phelps	Albert J. Vickery
Walter H. Albro	H. E. Millins [sic. Millius]
W. H. Stowell	Theo. G. Smith
Jno. Young	A. D. Symonds
E. W. Andrews	P. E. Lemunyan [C. J.]
John Young	C. R. Gerity
L. L. Updyke	Isaac Maxwell
Geo. H. Dickinson	M. M. Conklin
Robert R. Fuller	J. T. Morse
J. M. Robinson	J. A. Bundy
W. S. Gerity	L. Howes
Jno. T. Davidson	A. H. Sherwood
L. G. Jackson	S. H. Wagner
J. T. Dewitt	Alfred B. Dent
A. B. Hamilton	Edwin Warner

Identification of Petition Signers

Albro, Walter H.	Clerk and cigar maker
Andrews, Edwin W.	Sawmaker
Arnot, John Jr.	Banker, first mayor of the City of Elmira, later elected to Congress
Arnot, Mathias H.	Banker and corporation president
Atkinson, Frank H.	Lehigh Valley Coal Dealer
Atwater, Dwight	Flour Dealer
Baldwin, J. Davis	Coal Dealer
Barney, Joseph H.	Insurance Agent
Beecher, Thomas Kennicot	Pastor of Park Church
Bement, Edward P.	Retailer of pictures, frames, toys, and fancy goods
Brand, John	Leaf tobacco dealer
Brown, Charles W.	Physician and surgeon

Bundy, Jabin A.	Grocer
Bush, James John	Manager mercantile agency
Conklin, Melvin M.	Baker and confectioner
Cowen, Thaddeus C.	Chief of Police, merchant and popular public speaker
Crane, Theodore W.	Mark Twain's brother-in-law
Davidson, John T.	Lawyer
Dent, Alfred B.	Bookkeeper
DeWitt, Sutherland	U.S. Express company agent and Alderman
DeWitt, J. T.	Grocery clerk
Dexter, Seymour	Attorney, member of the state assembly
Dickinson, George H.	Grocer
Dickinson, George S.	Grocer
Drake, Henry E.	Jeweler
Dumars, Robert R.	Newspaperman, Alderman and Supervisor
Emerson, Joseph J.	Furniture salesman
Ferguson, William H.	Dealer in hides, wool, butter, eggs, tallow, etc.
Fitch, Arthur S.	Book and stationery business, County Clerk
Frost, William H.	Insurance agent
Gerity, Clayton R.	Wholesale druggist
Gerity, William S.	Wholesale druggist
Gilbert, Henry K.	Grocer
Gridley, G. A.	Hardware and plumbing merchant
Hall, Francis G.	Banker, operator of a planing mill
Hamilton, Andrew B.	Grocery porter
Harding, Charles L.	Insurance agent
Hart, William E.	Dry goods and carpet retailer
Hazard, Charles	Editor of the <i>Elmira Gazette</i> , and founder of the <i>Elmira Telegram</i>
Holden, Delos L.	Wholesale grocer
Hotchkiss, Thomas	Lumber dealer
Howes, Lorenzo	Retailer of boots and shoes
Humphrey, Lucius A.	Retailer of boots and shoes
Jackson, Louis G.	Salesman for an Elmira shirt manufacturer

Kent, Horace M.	Retailer of clothing and Gent's furnishing goods
Langdon, Charles J.	Mark Twain's brother-in-law
Lemunyan, Charles J.	Constable, teamster
Longstreet, William H.	Insurance agent and piano dealer
Lormore, William J.	Wholesale grocer
McDowell, Robert M.	Civil engineer
Millius, Henry E.	Carpenter
Palmer, Martin W.	Wheelwright
Phelps, Henry A.	Bookkeeper
Post, William T.	Real estate dealer
Pratt, Arthur	Office clerk
Preswick, Christopher	Books and stationery
Ransom, Henry V.	Law student and notary public
Reid, James R.	West Point graduate, engaged in iron business
Reynolds, Samuel T.	Capitalist
Richardson, Jackson	Boot and shoe manufacturer
Robinson, George M.	Furniture dealer and undertaker
Robinson, John M.	Furniture dealer and undertaker
Robinson, Lucius D.	Governor of New York State, 1877 to 1880
Sherwin, William F.	Passenger agent on Michigan Central R.R.
Shives, William E.	Builder
Slee, John D.	Manager of J. Langdon & Co. and President, Board of Education
Sly, James M.	Insurance agent
Smith, Elijah B.	Agricultural tools manufacturer
Smith, Theodore G.	Insurance agent
Stowell, William H.	Merchant tailor
Symonds, Alonzo D.	Stone quarrier
Towner, Ausburn	Editor, <i>Free Press</i> , author of <i>History of Chemung County</i>
UpDegraff, Thad S.	Medical Doctor and surgeon
Updyke, Lewis L.	Ice Dealer
Vickery, Albert J.	Bookkeeper
Wagner, Samuel H.	Shipping clerk
Wales, Theron A.	Physician at Elmira Water Cure
Ward, William A.	Stoneyard operator

Warner, Edwin	Teamster
Weaver, Erastus K.	Dealer in hides, wool, butter, etc.
Wright, Peter	Wheelwright
Wyckoff, Arcalous	Wooden water pipes
Wyckoff, C. Wesley	Hardware dealer
Wyckoff, Frank T.	Shipping clerk
Wyckoff, George W.	Retailer of boots and shoes
Wyckoff, Ernest L.	Retailer of boots and shoes
Young, J.	Shoemaker
Young, John	Merchant tailor

UNIDENTIFIED:

Fuller, Robert R.	Morse, J.T.
Hills, Fred D.	Sherwood, A. H.
Maxwell, Isaac	Thomson, C.H.

Eugene Zimmerman's Rendering of Adam

Elmira columnist Matt Richardson invited "Zim," the famous cartoonist Eugene Zimmerman from *Horseheads*, to submit his design for a fitting monument. It appeared in the *Elmira Star-Gazette* of May 1, 1934, along with Zim's explanation: "You will notice that I have substituted a leaf of that justly celebrated Big Flats tobacco, which I believe to be the most becoming [sic.] as a garment for Mr. Adam than the meager foliage of Bible history ... Besides it is an American product, and an attire that ever could be changed with the new crop of the weed... We have as much right to claim Chemung County as the locality in which the Garden of Eden existed as any other nation... Hence the local atmosphere." Local pride had not disappeared.



Zim's cartoon

Chapter Six

Friends and Visitors

Charlie Klapproth

Katy Leary

Rudyard Kipling

Mark Twain's capacity for friendships is well known. He enjoyed personal contacts with people of all kinds, finding in conversations some of the ideas for his writing. When in Elmira, Mark Twain generally sought to protect his privacy and spend his time working. He found in his study at Quarry Farm the seclusion and uninterrupted stretches of time that enabled him to produce so much of his best writing here. Still he found time for conversations with family and friends and received visitors both famous and little known.

He had regular discussions with his sister-in-law, Susan Crane, and her husband, Theodore, and their neighbors on East Hill, Doctors Silas and Rachel Gleason of the Water Cure and Thomas K. and Julia Beecher. In Elmira, he enjoyed the company of Zebulon R. Brockway, superintendent of the Elmira Reformatory, and several other Elmirans with whom he played billiards and swapped stories.

In addition to his neighbors of distinction, one of the places Mark Twain visited regularly when in Elmira was Klapproth's Saloon at 162 Lake Street. When the building that had housed Klapproth's was about to be torn down in 1969, Marshall Lowman contacted Dr. J. Ralph Murray, president of Elmira College where a new library was under construction. A change in the architect's plans and an extra \$37,000 made possible the construction of a Mark Twain Room in the new Gannett-Tripp Learning Center using the original wooden ceiling, the marble, the fireplace frame and the sculpture over the fireplace from Klapproth's famous establishment. These original items were a gift from Nicky and Tuffy Yunis. Off the Mark Twain Room in special stacks is housed the Elmira College collection of books by and about Mark Twain, first editions, translations, pictures, manuscripts, autographs, and memorabilia.

Charlie Klapproth's Cafe: Mark Twain Sipped Here

by W. Charles Barber

When a series of advertisements for Old Crow Whiskey featured Mark Twain, including one showing him in Klapproth's Tavern, Elmira newspaperman, W. Charles Barber, wrote an article for the Chemung Historical Journal, Vol. 8, No. 4 (June, 1963), pp. 1114-1116.

Not a few people could be joshed into crediting Mark Twain with writing "Vanity Fair" or Chesterfield's letters to his son or even Horatio Alger's "Strive and Succeed."

But ask them where Mark Twain sometimes took aboard a drink and they'll tell you the name of the "tavern" and the brand upon which he meditated day and night—if the claims of a certain advertiser who



Fireplace and Bas-Relief from Klapproth's Saloon, built into the Mark Twain Room in the Gannett-Tripp Learning Center at Elmira College in 1969. Photographed by Robert Heller.

must be nameless here are to be believed. We will note, however, that the product bears the name of a venerable bird known upon occasion to send grim farmers forth with loaded shotguns at the ready and no strong inclination to waste either time or shot.

Mark Twain, the advertisements tell us (and it happens that they're correct in more than one respect) from time to time visited Klapproth's cafe at 162 Lake St. The ad writers don't bother to spell the name right. Their version is "Klapproth" and they persist in calling his business place a "tavern" which is more than anybody around here managed to do.

The ads show Mark Twain regaling cronies with his yarns, which he did at Klapproth's (and everywhere else he went) and they show him with a glass of the advertiser's commodity at hand and a worried eye on the cafe's supply which appears to have dwindled to about 19 barrels.

One of the advertisements has Mark Twain alerting "Lou" on the state of things although in plain sight is enough of the commodity to last the humorist and his cronies through many and many an evening—however numerous and thirsty the company.

Fireplaces Still There

Much of Klapproth's famous cafe remains intact. Two fireplaces are on the north wall of 162 Lake St. (the Bunis package store is there now) [1963] and the first one is a beautiful thing with a cast iron equestrian scene let into the stone work. The one toward the back of the store, also on the north wall, is perhaps the one that provides the artist with his inspiration for the painting but it is isn't the way it used to be.

The second fireplace is in the area surrounded with beautiful mahogany woodwork. Overhead is a vast skylight. And the entire room still preserves the beamed oak ceiling that has done service for nearly a century.

In the front still can be seen some of the marble wainscoting that was one of the cafe's atmosphere-creating features. The old tile floor is still sound as new. And here and there can be seen spots where the heavy brass rail that extended the length of the long mahogany bar—about eight inches off the floor if memory serves—was locked down to insure a firm place upon which the polished boots of the cafe's discriminating customers could rest.

A Man of Quality

Klapproth's was a gentleman's haven. Charlie Klapproth saw to that. Decorum and good manners abided there and legend has it that from time to time the highly individualistic Thomas K. Beecher stopped in to have a glass of ale—never more than one and never one bought for a friend nor accepted from one.

The “Lou” of the Mark Twain ads was Louis Northrop, an amiable young gentleman who later became a decorating contractor and a member of the Board of Supervisors. He lived on Lormore St.

The name “Klapproth” somehow suited the place. It had a nice ring. And Charles Klapproth was a man of quality—a man who dispensed the best of everything under the best conditions and to the best people in town. He dealt in fine cigars as well as fine beverages and excellent food. The walk-in humidior at Lagonegro's cigar store was part of the old Klapproth equipment.

The *Star-Gazette* printed a news page story on Klapproth when he died at his home, 411 William St., on Dec. 9, 1922, after a brief illness. His sister, Emma, was with him when the end came.

His “fearlessness and independence won him respect and admiration,” the newspaper account said.

Klapproth was born in New York City on March 27, 1855, and came to Elmira with his family in 1860. After schooling, he worked for six years for the Rhodes & Munson dry goods concern and then assumed charge of the cafe established by his father.

He was a member of Ivy Lodge, F&AM, the Royal Arch, St. Omer's Commandery, Mecca Temple Shrine and Cashmere Grotto. He was also a member of Lodge 62 of Elks, the Exempt Firemen's Association and Cold Brook Club.

Funeral services were conducted by the Rev. Frederick Henstridge of Grace Church and the Rev. Rudolf Vieweg of the German Evangelical Church and burial was in Woodlawn.

Among older Elmirans, the name Klapproth still means quality, honor, and an insistence on gentlemanly conduct.

Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens) did not spend all his waking hours, when he was in Elmira, at Klapproth's. Neither did he spend them at the Rathbun, the City Club, The Advertiser office or in the company of one or two gentlemen who in their later years grew garrulous and made towering mountains out of their association with Mark Twain.

Twain's Busy Life

If he had followed the program laid out by some of the free-wheeling spinners of legends, he would have been busy about 31 hours a day.

Mark Twain was an industrious worker as well as a spinner of yarns, an entertainer of cronies and a consumer of whatever came in those barrels.

In Elmira Mark Twain did a lot of writing. He spent countless hours with his family. He played billiards. He played with an assortment of cats. He visited with such wonderful folks as Katy Leary, Auntie Cord, John Lewis, Patrick McAleer. He spent time with his great friend, Beecher and with another great friend, Z. R. Brockway.

He spent some time one afternoon in '89 with Rudyard Kipling. The artist refrained from sprinkling the Langdon yard with containers of the aforementioned remedy when he painted his picture of the youthful, hero-worshiping Kipling animatedly face-to-face with Twain. Those who can find in the humorist's life something besides a collection of charred oak staves and suitably lettered barrel heads have reason to be thankful for such forbearance.

We'll be grateful if the people who run the advertisements spell Klapproth the way the owner of the name did. 'Twill take only one more letter and whatever ink's necessary to make it print.

Katy Leary's Story

Elmira provided the Clemens family with Katy Leary who was as much a friend as a servant. Katy Leary went to work for the Clemenses in Hartford in 1880, and stayed with the family until after Mark Twain's death in 1910. She traveled abroad with the Clemenses and shared their family pleasures. She was also a source of strength in time of sorrow; at the death of Susy and Livy and Jean and, when Mark Twain himself died, to Clara. She adored Mark Twain, but never lost her simple Catholic faith in spite of his arguments. She concluded, "although he was always arguing and joking about religion and they all said he was an unbeliever, I don't think he was. I know he wasn't. I know he wasn't because when Jean died, years afterwards, and we stood looking at her, he says to me: 'Oh, Katy! She's in heaven with her mother.' Now if he hadn't believed in heaven or a hereafter, he wouldn't say that, would he? Oh, I think—I am sure he believed in

the hereafter. But he was pretty serious in arguing about religion.” “No, nothin’ can ever make me think that Mr. Clemens didn’t believe in a God—some kind of a God. I can’t say it too often!”

*After Mark Twain’s death, Katy Leary helped Clara close up the Stormfield home in Redding, Connecticut. When the Gabrilowitsches returned to Europe, she stayed in New York until 1922; then came back to Elmira where she lived, surrounded by books and pictures and mementoes of her life with the Clemenses, until her death on October 5, 1934. Soon after she returned to Elmira, Mary Lawton, a writer-friend of Clara Gabrilowitsch, collected her reminiscences which were published in 1925. The excerpt from Mary Lawton, *A Lifetime With Mark Twain*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1925), pp. 3-5, 49-50, 93-95, 100-101, 297-298 describes her employment in 1880, family life at Quarry Farm, an incident with a guinea hen, and Mark Twain and the telephone.*

I will begin when I first got my position. Well, at this period—I was born in Elmira, and went out sewing by the day—I was seventeen years old, and was earning fifty cents a day then. I could sew very good, you know (I learned my trade as dressmaker) and I went out sewing mostly making baby clothes. I was copying some of Mrs. J. Sloat Fassett’s baby clothes when Mrs. Stanchfield come in. Mrs. Stanchfield was a great friend of Mrs. Clemens. She visited there. She was there half a year as a rule. She was the wife of John B. Stanchfield—who got to be a very smart lawyer afterwards. Well, she come in and looked at my sewing and admired it very much and says, “Why, Katy, wouldn’t you like to leave Elmira?” And I said, “Yes, I would: I’ve nothing chaining me here!” So she says, “I know somebody would love to have you. She lives in Hartford, and Hartford is a beautiful place; she has three children and her name is Mrs. Clemens. She is a perfectly wonderful, lovely woman, and you would like her—and I think she’d like you.” She said she would see Mrs. Clemens and tell her about me and I would hear from her later.

Well, I didn’t think it would come to nothing—but it did. In a couple of weeks I had a letter from Mrs. Clemens asking me to come and see her (she was at Quarry Farm then); and she would go to her mother’s, Mrs. Langdon’s, and see me there on a Sunday evening.

So I went over to see her (Mrs. Clemens), I did. I was settin’ in the library waiting, and this wonderful, wonderful woman appeared, and she startled me with all her beauty—she was like an angel, almost. She wore a white silk dress and her hair was perfectly plain, you know,

combed down plain and done in a coil; but her face and her manner was wonderful, and I felt like she was something from another world.

“Why, is this Katy Leary!” she says. I told her “Yes.” Then she says to me, “Would you like to come and live with me?” “Oh yes!” I says. “Yes, I would.”

“Well, when could you come?” and I says, “Well, I need about a week or ten days to get ready.” “Why, you could come about...” (I don’t know what the month was, but she made it the 19th.) And I said, “Yes, I’ll be ready; I’ll come to Hartford then.” So she said, “Mr. Langdon will give the details of the traveling.” (Mr. Langdon was her father.) [Editors’ Note: Actually this was Charles Langdon, Livy’s brother. Her father died in 1870, ten years earlier.]

Of course, I’d never traveled anywheres then. I was green as a monkey. Well, she said Mr. Langdon would give me the details, and then she called somebody in the hall:

“Youth, Youth dear, will you come in here?”

And he came in, and I looked at Mr. Clemens for the first time. But I didn’t know who Mr. Clemens was, never knew he wrote a book nor didn’t know anything about him; then Mrs. Clemens said:

“Now this is Katy Leary that is coming to live with us in Hartford.”

Well, then he gave me the once-over pretty quick, looked at me pretty sharp, I can tell you.

“Have you got any money?” he said. “How much will you need?” Of course I didn’t know how much I needed, so he pulled out five dollars. “If that isn’t enough,” he said, “you can charge it to us when you come to Hartford; but” he says, “I think maybe that will buy your ticket anyway.” So that was the end of that...

When I first left home to work for Mrs. Clemens and I told my mother I was going to Hartford, she didn’t want me to go—didn’t want me to leave home.

“Oh! I have to!” I said. “This woman is perfectly wonderful! She’s so lovely,” I said. “I know I’ll be happy there. I want to go. I **want** to live with her.”

Well, my mother said, “I’d like to see her first,” so I think I must have sent word some way to Mrs. Clemens that my mother wanted to see her, and instead of her asking my mother to come and see her as most folks would, she came to see my mother herself.

My mother told her that she didn't like me to leave home because I was too young and never was away before.

"Oh!" Mrs. Clemens said. "Now, Mrs. Leary, don't worry about Katy. I'll take good care of her—I'll take just as good care of her as I would of my own children. I'll always look after her," she said. "Nothing will happen to her; and if she's sick, I'll take care of her, and when she's well, I'll take care of her just the same"—Which was a bad thing for me in one way when I wanted to "gad" around, for of course I had to ask her every time I went out and tell who I was going with... .

Of course, the Clemens children (and by that I mean Clara and Susy) certainly had the most wonderful time that any children ever had in this world and everything to interest them and to make them happy.

When they was quite little, they had an awful cunnin' little play-house up at Quarry Farm. 'Twas right up in a kind of a little bower—all vines and bushes and stuff, and so Mrs. Clemens said they'd build a little house for them there. It was a regular little cottage when it was finished—with little windows, a porch and a door and everything like a regular house. There was dishes and chairs and little curtains to the windows. It was an awful cunnin' little place. And they called it "Ellerslie"—out of some book I guess, but I don't remember what one. And they called that little tangle of bushes back of it "Helen's Bower." They was just crazy about it and played there all the time when they was at Quarry Farm. They loved them summers there. They lived out of doors all the time, and they used to have a little donkey to ride on, too, and they used to read with their mother sometimes. They was reading English history, I remember, one summer when they was getting ready to go to Europe; and then almost every day Clara and Susy used to sew a little mite too. That is, they tried to, but it didn't amount to much. Jean was so little then, she was just kind of runnin' around, playing with the cats mostly, and she was always hungry—she was always asking her mother what she could have to eat! There was one summer that they had eleven cats up there at the farm. Mr. Clemens, you know, was so crazy about cats that he'd stop anything—even his writing, to speak to a cat! They used to have what he called a regular "cat procession" up at Quarry Farm, when he and Mrs. Clemens and all the children and the donkey, too, and all the cats bringing up the rear, would walk around the grounds. All the cats Mr. Clemens had seemed to understand everything he said to them—just like humans, they'd listen to him... .

Well, now I'll go on with that little story about Lewis, the old colored man, and Mr. Clemens. There was an old cackling guinea hen up at Quarry Farm that summer, and one night that guinea hen nearly cackled her head off—such a noise! Mr. Clemens was wild about it, and he rushed right out in the night and chased that hen all over the farm, because it was disturbing Mrs. Clemens—keeping her awake. But he couldn't catch it, of course. So in the morning he called Lewis and he said, "Lewis, I want you to catch that guinea hen to-day and kill it; and for punishment, I want **you** to eat it, too, every bit of it yourself, so I'll know it's dead and gone."

Well, Lewis killed the guinea hen, and took it home and eat it. The family was getting ready to go to Europe right away, and it seems as soon as Mr. Clemens got to London that trip he went to a grand dinner one night at a restaurant, and the first thing that he seen on the bill of fare was 'Guinea Hen'. So just for fun he thought he'd order it. Well, he eat it and said it was the most delicious thing he'd ever tasted in all his life—and when he thought of that other guinea hen that Lewis had killed up in Elmira and eaten himself, he said he felt like coming right home again, and killing Lewis!

... it took him a long time to get used to the telephone. He was always mad at it and always thought it was a nuisance. One time, just before New Year's, it was, he was wishing everybody in the whole world a Happy New Year—everybody—whether he knew him or not—rich and poor, white and black—everybody everywhere, the whole world (except Mr. Bell, the inventor of the telephone). "Because," he says "the telephone's a damned nuisance and so I won't wish him a Happy New Year's!"

Mr. Bell wrote to him to have him take it back, but Mr. Clemens didn't want to. He still maintained that old instrument was a "damned nuisance"—that telephone invention of Mr. Bell's. He wrote a letter that was published in all the newspapers, and of course Mr. Bell saw it; so he asked him if he wouldn't take it all back and please to wish him a Happy New Year's too? Well, Mr. Clemens was very stubborn and wouldn't take it back then. He wrote to Mr. Bell and said that he'd think it over, but he wouldn't take it back just then, anyway. He might in another hundred years—he'd see!

But he did take it back later, though, when Mrs. Clemens' mother, Mrs. Langdon, died in Elmira and Mr. Beecher was going to preach a wonderful sermon about her (he wasn't going to preach it at the funeral

but he was going to preach it several months later); then Mr. Bell wrote Mr. Clemens and asked him if he couldn't do something for him about listening to that sermon without having to leave his house. Mrs. Clemens was sick and couldn't go to Elmira, and Mr. Bell said he would put wires in at the Park Church right under Mr. Beecher's pulpit, and he would connect them up in the library at Hartford, so's Mr. Clemens could sit in the library with his family and be comfortable and hear the sermon without budging. Mr. Bell said he would put in seven or eight receivers and they could all set right there and listen to the sermon. Then Mr. Clemens wrote him and thanked him, and asked him what his charges would be, and Mr. Bell wrote right back, "Nothing—nothing at all! But just please to wish me a Happy New Year." So Mr. Clemens said, "Well, **now** you can have all the Happy New Years you want—Happy New Years for the rest of your life!" So you see, he did wish him a Happy New Year's after all! But that was Mr. Clemens' way—his bark was always worse than his bite—which was really no bite at all.

Rudyard Kipling's Account

Perhaps the most famous visitor attracted to Elmira to see Mark Twain was Rudyard Kipling. He was still a young newspaperman, yet to be recognized as a writer, when he appeared in Elmira in 1889. One version of the story of his visit has been given in the account by Rufus Rockwell Wilson (Chapter One). Three other versions are presented here. The first is by Rudyard Kipling himself, from American Notes, International Publishing Company, New York, c. 1889, pp. 205-267.

You are a contemptible lot, over yonder. Some of you are Commissioners, and some Lieutenant-Governors, and some have the V.C., and a few are privileged to walk about the Mall arm in arm with the Viceroy; but I have seen Mark Twain this golden morning, have shaken his hand, and smoked a cigar—no, two cigars—with him, and talked with him for more than two hours! Understand clearly that I do not despise you; indeed, I don't. I am only very sorry for you, from the Viceroy downward. To soothe your envy and to prove that I still regard you as my equals, I will tell you all about it.

They said in Buffalo that he was in Hartford, Conn.; and again they said “perchance he is gone upon a journey to Portland;” and a big, fat drummer vowed that he knew the great man intimately, and that Mark was spending the summer in Europe—which information so upset me that I embarked upon the wrong train, and was incontinently turned out by the conductor three-quarters of a mile from the station, amid the wilderness of railway tracks. Have you ever, encumbered with great-coat and valise, tried to dodge diversely-minded locomotives when the sun was shining in your eyes? But I forgot that you have not seen Mark Twain, you people of no account!

Saved from the jaws of the cowcatcher, me wandering devious a stranger met.

“Elmira is the place. Elmira in the State of New York—this State, not two hundred miles away;” and he added, perfectly unnecessarily, “Slide, Kelley, slide.”

I slid on the West Shore line, I slid till midnight, and they dumped me down at the door of a frowzy hotel in Elmira. Yes, they knew all about “that man Clemens,” but reckoned he was not in town; had gone East somewhere. I had better possess my soul in patience till the morrow, and then dig up the “man Clemens’ ” brother-in-law, who was interested in coal.

The idea of chasing half a dozen relatives in addition to Mark Twain up and down a city of thirty thousand inhabitants kept me awake. Morning revealed Elmira, whose streets were desolated by railway tracks, and whose suburbs were given up to the manufacture of door-sashes and window-frames. It was surrounded by pleasant, fat, little hills, rimmed with timber and topped with cultivation. The Chemung River flowed generally up and down the town, and had just finished flooding a few of the main streets.

The hotel-man and the telephone man assured me that the much-desired brother-in-law was out of town, and no one seemed to know where “the man Clemens” abode. Later on I discovered that he had not summered in that place for more than nineteen seasons, and so was comparatively a new arrival.

A friendly policeman volunteered the news that he had seen Twain, or “some one very like him” driving a buggy the day before. This gave me a delightful sense of nearness. Fancy living in a town where you could see the author of *Tom Sawyer*, or “some one very like him,” jolting over the pavements in a buggy!

“He lives out yonder at East Hill,” said the policeman; “three miles from here.”

Then the chase began—in a hired hack, up an awful hill, where sunflowers blossomed by the roadside, and crops waved, and *Harper’s Magazine* cows stood in eligible and commanding attitudes knee-deep in clover, all ready to be transferred to photogravure. The great man must have been prosecuted by outsiders aforetime, and fled up the hill for refuge.

Presently the driver stopped at a miserable, little white wood shanty, and demanded “Mister Clemens.”

“I know he’s a big-bug and all that,” he explained, “but you can never tell what sort of notions those sort of men take into their heads to live in, anyways.”

There rose up a young lady who was sketching thistletops and golden rod, amid a plentiful supply of both, and set the pilgrims on the right path.

“It’s a pretty Gothic house on the lefthand side a little way farther on.”

“Gothic h_____,” said the driver. “Very few of the city hacks take this drive, specially if they know they are coming out here,” and he glared at me savagely.

It was a very pretty house, anything but Gothic, clothed with ivy, standing in a very big compound, and fronted by a veranda full of chairs and hammocks. The roof of the veranda was a trellis-work of creepers, and the sun peeping through moved on the shining boards below.

Decidedly this remote place was an ideal one for work, if a man could work among these soft airs and the murmur of the long-eared crops.

Appeared suddenly a lady used to dealing with rampageous outsiders. “Mr. Clemens has just walked downtown. He is at his brother-in-law’s house.”

Then he was within shouting distance, after all, and the chase had not been in vain. With speed I fled, and the driver, skidding the wheel and swearing audibly, arrived at the bottom of that hill without accidents. It was in the pause that followed between ringing the brother-in-law’s bell and getting an answer that it occurred to me for the first time Mark Twain might possibly have other engagements than the entertainment of escaped lunatics from India, be they never so full of admiration. And in another man’s house—anyhow, what had I come to do or say?

Suppose the drawing-room should be full of people,—suppose a baby was sick, how was I to explain that I only wanted to shake hands with him?

Then things happened somewhat in this order. A big, darkened drawing-room; a huge chair; a man with eyes, mane of grizzled hair, a brown mustache covering a mouth as delicate as a woman's, a strong, square hand shaking mine, and the slowest calmest, levellest voice in all the world saying:—

“Well, you think you owe me something, and you've come to tell me so. That's what I call squaring a debt handsomely.”

“Piff!” from a cob-pipe (I always said that a Missouri meerschaum was the best smoking in the world), and, behold! Mark Twain had curled himself up in the big armchair, and I was smoking reverently, as befits one in the presence of his superior.

The thing that struck me first was that he was an elderly man; yet, after a minute's thought, I perceived that it was otherwise, and in five minutes, the eyes looking at me, I saw that the gray hair was an accident of the most trivial. He was quite young. I was shaking his hand. I was smoking his cigar, and I was hearing him talk—this man I had learned to love and admire fourteen thousand miles away.

Reading his books, I had striven to get an idea of his personality, and all my preconceived notions were wrong and beneath the reality. Blessed is the man who finds no disillusion when he is brought face to face with a revered writer. That was a moment to be remembered; the landing of a twelve-pound salmon was nothing to it. I had hooked Mark Twain, and he was treating me as though under certain circumstances I might be an equal.

About this time I became aware that he was discussing the copyright question. Here, so far as I remember, is what he said. Attend to the words of the oracle through this unworthy medium transmitted. You will never be able to imagine the long, slow surge of the drawl, and the deadly gravity of the countenance, the quaint pucker of the body, one foot thrown over the arm of the chair, the yellow pipe clinched in one corner of the mouth, and the right hand casually caressing the square chin:—

“Copyright? Some men have morals, and some men have—other things. I presume a publisher is a man. He is not born. He is created—by circumstances. Some publishers have morals. Mine have. They pay me for the English productions of my books. When you hear men talking of Bret Harte's works and other works and my books being pirated, ask

them to be sure of their facts. I think they'll find the books are paid for. It was ever thus.

"I remember an unprincipled and formidable publisher. Perhaps he's dead now. He used to take my short stories—I can't call it steal or pirate them. It was beyond these things altogether. He took my stories one at a time and made a book of it. If I wrote an essay on dentistry or theology or any little thing of that kind— just an essay that long (he indicated half an inch on his finger), any sort of essay—that publisher would amend and improve my essay.

"He would get another man to write some more to it or cut it about exactly as his needs required. Then he would publish a book called *Dentistry by Mark Twain*, that little essay and some other things not mine added. Theology would make another book, and so on. I do not consider that fair. It's an insult. But he's dead now, I think. I didn't kill him.

"There is a great deal of nonsense talked about international copyright. The proper way to treat a copyright is to make it exactly like real estate in every way.

"It will settle itself under these conditions. If Congress were to bring in a law that a man's life was not to extend over a hundred and sixty years, somebody would laugh. That law wouldn't concern anybody. The man would be out of the jurisdiction of the court. A term of years in copyright comes to exactly the same thing. No law can make a book live or cause it to die before the appointed time.

"Tottletown, Cal., was a new town, with a population of three thousand—banks, fire-brigade, brick buildings, and all the modern improvements. It lived, it flourished, and it disappeared. To-day no man can put his foot on any remnant of Tottletown, Cal. It's dead. London continues to exist. Bill Smith, author of a book read for the next year or so is real estate in Tottletown. William Shakespeare, whose works are extensively read, is real estate in London. Let Bill Smith, equally with Mr. Shakespeare now deceased, have as complete a control over his copyright as he would over his real estate. Let him gamble it away, drink it away, or—give it to the church. Let his heirs and assigns treat it in the same manner.

"Every now and again I go up to Washington, sitting on a board to drive that sort of view into Congress. Congress takes its arguments against international copyright delivered ready made, and—Congress isn't very strong. I put the real-estate view of the case before one of the Senators.

“He said: ‘Suppose a man has written a book that will live forever?’

“I said: ‘Neither you nor I will ever live to see that man, but we’ll assume it. What then?’

“He said: ‘I want to protect the world against that man’s heirs and assigns, working under your theory.’

“I said: ‘You think that all the world has no commercial sense. The book that will live forever can’t be artificially kept up at inflated prices. There will always be very expensive editions of it and cheap ones issuing side by side.’

“Take the case of Sir Walter Scott’s novels,” Mark Twain continued, turning to me. “When the copyright notes protected them, I bought editions as expensive as I could afford, because I liked them. At the same time the same firm were selling editions that a cat might buy. They had their real estate, and not being fools, recognized that one portion of the plot could be worked as a gold mine, another as a vegetable garden, and another as a marble quarry. Do you see?”

What I saw with the greatest clearness was Mark Twain being forced to fight for the simple proposition that a man has as much right to the work of his brains (think of the heresy of it!) as to the labor of his hands. When the old lion roars, the young whelps growl. I growled assentingly, and the talk ran on from books in general to his own in particular.

Growing bold, and feeling that I had a few hundred thousand folk at my back, I demanded whether Tom Sawyer married Judge Thatcher’s daughter and whether we were ever going to hear of Tom Sawyer as a man.

“I haven’t decided,” quoth Mark Twain, getting up, filling his pipe, and walking up and down the room in his slippers. “I have a notion of writing the sequel to *Tom Sawyer* in two ways. In one I would make him rise to great honor and go to Congress, and in the other I should hang him. Then the friends and enemies of the book could take their choice.”

Here I lost my reverence completely, and protested against any theory of the sort, because to me at least, Tom Sawyer was real.

“Oh, he **is** real,” said Mark Twain. “He’s all the boy that I have known or recollect, but that would be a good way of ending the book”; then, turning round, “because, when you come to think of it, neither religion, training, nor education avails anything against the force of circumstances that drive a man. Suppose we took the next four and twenty

years of Tom Sawyer's life, and gave a little joggle to the circumstances that controlled him. He would, logically and according to the joggle, turn out a rip or an angel."

"Do you believe that, then?"

"I think so. Isn't it what you call Kismet?"

"Yes; but don't give him two joggles and show the result, because he isn't your property any more. He belongs to us."

He laughed—a large, wholesome laugh—and this began a dissertation on the rights of a man to do what he liked with his own creations, which being a matter of purely professional interest, I will mercifully omit.

Returning to the big chair, he, speaking of truth and the like in literature, said that an autobiography was the one work in which a man, against his own will and in spite of his utmost striving to the contrary, revealed himself in his true light to the world.

"A good deal of your life on the Mississippi is autobiographical, isn't it?" I asked.

"As near as it can be—when a man is writing to a book and about himself. But in genuine autobiography, I believe it is impossible for a man to tell the truth about himself or to avoid impressing the reader with the truth about himself.

"I made an experiment once. I got a friend of mine—a man painfully given to speak the truth on all occasions—a man who wouldn't dream of telling a lie—and I made him write his autobiography for his own amusement and mine. He did it. The manuscript would have made an octavo volume, but—good, honest man that he was—in every single detail of his life that I knew about he turned out, on paper, a formidable liar. He could not help himself.

"It is not in human nature to write the truth about itself. None the less the reader gets a general impression from an autobiography whether the man is a fraud or a good man. The reader can't give his reasons any more than a man can explain why a woman struck him as being lovely when he doesn't remember her hair, eyes, teeth, or figure. And the impression that the reader gets is a correct one."

"Do you ever intend to write an autobiography?"

"If I do, it will be as other men have done—with the most earnest desire to make myself out to be the better man in every little business that has been to my discredit; and I shall fail, like the others, to make my readers believe anything except the truth."

This naturally led to a discussion on conscience. Then said Mark Twain, and his words are mighty and to be remembered:

“Your conscience is a nuisance. A conscience is like a child. If you pet it and play with it and let it have everything that it wants, it becomes spoiled and intrudes on all your amusements and most of your griefs. Treat your conscience as you would treat anything else. When it is rebellious, spank it—be severe with it, argue with it, prevent it from coming to play with you at all hours, and you will secure a good conscience; that is to say, a properly trained one. A spoiled one simply destroys all the pleasure in life. I think I have reduced mine to order. At least, I haven’t heard from it for some time. Perhaps I have killed it from over-severity. It’s wrong to kill a child, but, in spite of all I have said, a conscience differs from a child in many ways. Perhaps it’s best when it’s dead.”

Here he told me a little—such things as a man may tell a stranger—of his early life and upbringing, and in what manner he had been influenced for good by the example of his parents. He spoke always through his eyes, a light under the heavy eyebrows; anon crossing the room with a step as light as a girl’s, to show me some book or other; then resuming his walk up and down the room, puffing at the cob pipe. I would have given much for nerve enough to demand the gift of that pipe—value, five cents when new. I understood why certain savage tribes ardently desired the liver of brave men slain in combat. That pipe would have given me, perhaps, a hint of his keen insight into the souls of men. But he never laid it aside within stealing reach.

Once, indeed, he put his hand on my shoulder. It was an investiture of the Star of India, blue silk, trumpets, and diamond-studded jewel, all complete. If, hereafter, in the changes and chances of this mortal life, I fall to cureless ruin, I will tell the superintendent of the workhouse that Mark Twain once put his hand on my shoulder; and he shall give me a room to myself and a double allowance of paupers’ tobacco.

“I never read novels myself,” said he, “except when the popular persecution forces me to—when people plague me to know what I think of the last book that every one is reading.”

“And how did the latest persecution affect you?”

“Robert?” said he, interrogatively.

I nodded.

“I read it, of course, for the workmanship. That made me think I had neglected novels too long—that there might be a good many books as graceful in style somewhere on the shelves; so I began a course of novel

reading. I have dropped it now; it did not amuse me. But as regards Robert, the effect on me was exactly as though a singer of street ballads were to hear excellent music from a church organ. I listened, and I liked what I heard. I am speaking of the grace and beauty of the style.”

“You see,” he went on, “every man has his private opinion about a book. But that is my private opinion. If I had lived in the beginning of things I should have looked around the township to see what popular opinion thought of the murder of Abel before I openly condemned Cain. I should have had my private opinion, of course, but I shouldn’t have expressed it until I had felt the way. You have my private opinion about that book. I don’t know what my public ones are exactly. They won’t upset the earth.”

He recurled himself into the chair and talked of other things.

“I spend nine months of the year at Hartford. I have long ago satisfied myself that there is no hope of doing much work during those nine months. People come in and call. They call at all hours, about everything in the world. One day I thought I would keep a list of interruptions. It began this way: —

“A man came and would see no one but Mr. Clemens. He was an agent for a photogravure reproductions of Salon pictures. I very seldom use Salon pictures in my books.

“After that man another man, who refused to see any one but Mr. Clemens, came to make me write to Washington about something. I saw him. I saw a third man, then a fourth. By this time it was noon. I had grown tired of keeping the list. I wished to rest.

“But the fifth man was the only one of the crowd with a card of his own. He sent up his card. ‘Ben Koontz, Hannibal, MO.’ I was raised in Hannibal. Ben was an old schoolmate of mine. Consequently I threw the house wide open and rushed with both hands out at a big, fat, heavy man, who was not the Ben I had ever known—nor anything like him.

“‘But **is** it you, Ben?’” I said. ‘You’ve altered in the last thousand years.’

“The fat man said: ‘Well, I’m not Koontz exactly, but I met him down in Missouri, and he told me to be sure and call on you, and he gave me his card, and’—here he acted the little scene for my benefit—‘if you can wait a minute till I can get out the circulars—I’m not Koontz exactly, but I’m traveling with the fullest line of rods you ever saw.’”

“And what happened?” I asked breathlessly.

“I shut the door. He was not Ben Koontz—exactly—not my old schoolfellow, but I had shaken him by both hands in love, and ... I had been bearded by a lightning-rod man in my own house.

“As I was saying, I do very little work in Hartford. I come here for three months every year, and I work four or five hours a day in a study down the garden of that little house on the hill. Of course, I do not object to two or three interruptions. When a man is in the full swing of his work these little things do not affect him. Eight or ten or twenty interruptions retard composition.”

I was burning to ask him all manner of impertinent questions, as to which of his works he himself preferred, and so forth; but, standing in awe of his eyes, I dared not. He spoke on, and I listened, groveling.

It was a question of mental equipment that was on the carpet, and I am still wondering whether he meant what he said.

“Personally, I never care for fiction or story-books. What I like to read about are facts and statistics of any kind. If they are only facts about the raising of radishes, they interest me. Just now, for instance, before you came in”—he pointed to an encyclopaedia on the shelves—“I was reading an article about ‘Mathematics.’ Perfectly pure mathematics.

“My own knowledge of mathematics stops at ‘twelve times twelve’, but I enjoyed that article immensely. I didn’t understand a word of it; but facts, or what a man believes to be facts, are always delightful. That mathematical fellow believed in his facts. So do I. Get your facts first and”—the voice dies away to an almost inaudible drone—“then you can distort ’em as much as you please.”

Bearing this precious advice in my bosom, I left; the great man assuring me with gentle kindness that I had not interrupted him in the least. Once outside the door, I yearned to go back and ask some questions—it was easy enough to think of them now—but his time was his own, though his books belonged to me.

I should have ample time to look back to that meeting across the graves of the days. But it was sad to think of the things he had not spoken about.

In San Francisco the men of *The Call* told me many legends of Mark’s apprenticeship in their paper five and twenty years ago; how he was a reporter delightfully incapable of reporting according to the needs of the day. He preferred, so they said, to coil himself into a heap and meditate until the last minute. Then he would produce copy bearing

no sort of relationship to his legitimate work—copy that made the editor swear horribly, and the readers of *The Call* ask for more.

I should like to have heard Mark's version of that, with some stories of his joyous and variegated past. He has been journeyman printer (in those days he wandered from the banks of the Missouri even to Philadelphia), pilot cub and full-blown pilot, soldier of the South (that was for three weeks only), private secretary to a Lieutenant-Governor of Nevada (that displeased him), miner, editor, special correspondent in the Sandwich Islands, and the Lord only knows what else. If so experienced a man could by any means be made drunk, it would be a glorious thing to fill him up with composite liquors, and, in the language of his own country, "let him retrospect." But these eyes will never see that orgy fit for the gods!

Mark Twain's Account of Kipling's Visit

The following account of Kipling's visit to Elmira was written by Mark Twain on August 11, 1906, and published in Charles Neider's The Autobiography of Mark Twain, London: Chatto and Windus, 1960, pp. 286-288.

On his way through the State of New York he stopped off at Elmira and made a tedious and blistering journey up to Quarry Farm in quest of me. He ought to have telephoned the farm first; then he would have learned that I was at the Langdon homestead, hardly a quarter of a mile from his hotel. But he was only a lad of twenty-four and properly impulsive and he set out without inquiring on that dusty and roasting journey up the hill. He found Susy Crane and my little Susy there and they came as near making him comfortable as the weather and the circumstances would permit.

The group sat on the veranda and while Kipling rested and refreshed himself he refreshed the others with his talk, talk of quality which was well above what they were accustomed to, talk which might be likened to footprints, so strong and definite was the impression which it left behind. They often spoke wonderingly of Kipling's talk afterward and they recognized that they had been in contact with an extraordinary man, but it is more than likely that they were the only persons who had perceived that he was extraordinary. It is most likely that they were

Eric Ericsons who had discovered a continent but did not suspect the horizonless extent of it. His was an unknown name and was to remain unknown for a year yet, but Susy kept his card and treasured it as an interesting possession. Its address was Allahabad.

No doubt India had been to her an imaginary land up to this time, a fairyland, a dreamland, a land made out of poetry and moonlight for the Arabian Nights to do their gorgeous miracles in; and doubtless Kipling's flesh and blood and modern clothes realized it to her for the first time and solidified it. I think so because she more than once remarked upon its incredible remoteness from the world that we were living in, and computed that remoteness and pronounced the result with a sort of awe, fourteen thousand miles, or sixteen thousand, whichever it was. Kipling had written upon the card a compliment to me. This gave the card an additional value to Susy's eyes, since as a distinction it was the next thing to being recognized by a denizen of the moon.

Kipling came down that afternoon and spent a couple of hours with me, and at the end of that time I had surprised him as much as he had surprised me, and the honors were easy. I believed that he knew more than any person I had met before, and I knew that he knew I knew less than any person he had met before—though he did not say it and I was not expecting that he would. When he was gone, Mrs. Langdon wanted to know about my visitor. I said, "He is a stranger to me but he is a most remarkable man—and I am the other one. Between us, we cover all knowledge; he knows all that can be known and I know the rest."

He was a stranger to me and to all the world and remained so for twelve months, then he became suddenly known and universally known. From that day to this he has held this unique distinction; that of being the only living person, not head of a nation, whose voice is heard around the world the moment it drops a remark, the only such voice in existence that does not go by slow ship and rail but always travels first-class by cable.

About a year after Kipling's visit in Elmira, George Warner came into our library one morning in Hartford with a small book in his hand and asked me if I had ever heard of Rudyard Kipling. I said, "No."

He said I would hear of him very soon and that the noise he was going to make would be loud and continuous. The little book was the *Plain Tales* and he left it for me to read, saying it was charged with a new and inspiring fragrance and would blow a refreshing breath around the world that would revive the nations. A day or two later he brought a copy

of the *London World*, which had a sketch of Kipling in it and a mention of the fact that he had traveled in the United States. According to this sketch he had passed through Elmira. This remark, added to the additional fact that he hailed from India, attracted my attention—also Susy's. She went to her room and brought his card from its place in the frame of her mirror, and the Quarry Farm visitor stood identified.

Katy Leary's Comments on the Visit of Rudyard Kipling

Some additional detail is given in the account by Katy Leary as told to Mary Lawton, A Lifetime With Mark Twain, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1925,) pp. 160-161.

... The only trouble was that Kipling heard the sound of the dishes in the dining-room and knew it was lunch time and there was something to eat, and I suppose it made him hungry as a bear to hear them. But the lunch kept going right on in the dining-room and Mr. Clemens never made any sign. You see Mr. Clemens never eat any lunch himself. Mr. Kipling, of course, didn't know that and so Mr. Clemens, he never thought about asking him to stay. Of course he enjoyed the talk very much but he was pretty hungry, and finally got up to go and started back down to the station.

Well, the next day he had an interview in some of the newspapers (I heard) which was republished and republished. He said he had just come back from India and had heard about Mark Twain so much that he wanted to see him, and he done all this runnin' around and chased all the way up to Elmira to see him—but never got a single thing to eat. But anyway, he'd had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Clemens although they didn't ask him to stay to lunch.

Of course Mr. Clemens answered the letter in the newspaper and he said he was very sorry, but to tell the truth, he didn't know who Kipling was; he didn't know where he'd come from nor how hungry he was. If he'd known, Mr. Clemens said, that he'd come from India without having anything to eat, why, he said, he'd of invited him to lunch for a week! "But," he says, "Mr. Kipling, the next time we meet, wherever

it be, on land or sea, we'll have the very best the place can afford. We'll have the best meal together that money can buy—and I'll buy it too!"

Samuel Clemens Writes to Rudyard Kipling, in England

Mark Twain did not forget the visit nor the exchange over not inviting Kipling to lunch. When on his round-the-world lecture tour in 1895, he sent Kipling a letter with an invitation to meet him in India. (Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain's Letters Vol. 2, Harper & Bros., New York & London, 1917, p. 629.)

August, 1895.

DEAR KIPLING,—It is reported that you are about to visit India. This has moved me to journey to that far country in order that I may unload from my conscience a debt long due to you. Years ago you came from India to Elmira to visit me, as you said at the time. It has always been my purpose to return that visit and that great compliment some day. I shall arrive next January and you must be ready. I shall come riding my ayah with his tusks adorned with silver bells and ribbons and escorted by a troop of native howdahs richly clad and mounted upon a herd of wild bungalows; and you must be on hand with a few bottles of ghee, for I shall be thirsty.

Affectionately,
S.L. Clemens

Chapter Seven

Park Church and Thomas K. Beecher

Although Mark Twain's religious skepticism is well known, some of his closest friends were clergymen and persons with a strong faith. In Elmira, he became good friends with a most unusual clergyman, the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, and his equally able wife, Julia. Beecher was the pastor of the Park Church of which Jervis Langdon was a founding member. As Mrs. Eva Taylor, historian of the church, has written, "When Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain) became the husband of Olivia Langdon, he married into the first family of The Park Church. Mr. Beecher was Olivia's beloved pastor, and Mrs. Beecher, her Sunday School Teacher."

The Park Church of Elmira had a history of unorthodoxy. It was founded as the Independent Congregational Church in 1846 by a group of anti-slavery members of the First Presbyterian Church. After a series of short-lived pastorates, it called the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher in 1854 to begin an association that enriched both the church and the city for the next forty-six years. Thomas K., half brother of the better-known Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, was the next to the youngest of the thirteen children of Lyman Beecher. Although not the best known of that remarkable family, he was one of the most able and perhaps the most interesting of the lot.

Beecher stories still circulate as part of Elmira's folklore and the Thomas K. Beecher statue in Wisner Park is one of the city's most familiar landmarks. Beecher's association with The Park Church and Elmira began with an unusual letter in which he set forth the conditions on which he would accept the call. The church and its members were as unusual for that day as the young minister whose conditions they accepted and whose ministry they supported until his death in 1900. With little concern for the proper image a clergyman was supposed to have, Beecher commonly wore rough, working man's clothing and a distinctive cloth cap, which he showed Susan Crane how to make for him and with which she kept him supplied. "He preached no doctrine, but merely the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and the duty of every Christian literally to accept and follow the teachings of Christ." He played billiards and baseball, joined a whist

club, and even stopped in a local saloon for an occasional glass of beer. Always interested in science and mechanics, he assumed responsibility for the town clock and helped to found the Elmira Academy of Science. So unconventional a clergyman could not have failed to win Mark Twain's admiration.

In 1857, Thomas K. Beecher married Julia Jones, a friend of his first wife, Olivia Day, who had died just before he came to Elmira. Julia Beecher was attractive, intelligent and energetic, a full partner in her husband's ministry. Their home was a cottage across from Doctors Silas and Rachel Gleason's Water Cure on the road to Quarry Farm. Mark Twain often stopped by as he walked from Quarry Farm to the Langdon home in Elmira. The story of his contract with Julia Beecher after a discussion on immortality is told by Jervis Langdon in the Appendix. The three stones with the verses were given to Elmira College as an anonymous gift.

Mark Twain's last public appearance in Elmira was at the Park Church. The occasion was a demonstration of the Beecher Memorial Organ, built by Robert Hope-Jones, to nearly forty of the best-known organists from the New York metropolitan area. Jervis Langdon, president of the Hope-Jones Organ Company, arranged the program which included one of the company's most famous stockholders, Mark Twain. The account of this visit is given in Chapter IV.

The Park Church, one of the most important sites in Elmira associated with Mark Twain, suffered severe damage in the flood of 1972. The members voted to restore the building and in 1975 the 100th anniversary of the first service in the building was celebrated by a vigorous congregation continuing a rich program of religious and community services in the spirit of the church's founders.

Mr. Beecher and the Clergy

by S'CAT.

When Thomas K. Beecher first arrived in Elmira, he revived a Ministerial Association, an organization that provided the ministers of the various churches with an opportunity for fellowship and intellectual discussion at regular meetings. Some of the ministers did not approve of Beecher's unclerical habits and were upset by his innovations. Since his church building was too small, Beecher rented rooms in a downtown building where he had regular hours for those who wanted to talk with him, and where the women's sewing circle could meet and church suppers were held. He set up a billiard table and played pool with the boys

of the church, and opened in these rooms the town's first free public library with books of his own and of his parishioners. Real trouble began when he engaged the Opera House to hold Sunday evening meetings, the auditorium of his own church being unable to hold all of those who wished to attend. Although he invited his fellow clergymen to join him, the members of the Ministerial Association denounced the idea of religious services in an opera house. When Beecher's Sunday evening meetings grew more and more popular to the point where they even crowded the Opera House, the Ministerial Association responded by expelling Beecher from membership.

When Mark Twain learned of the action, the result was one of his most delightful essays which appeared in the Elmira Weekly Advertiser on April 17, 1869. Entitled "Mr. Beecher and the Clergy," it was signed "S'cat," because Twain, who had been engaged to Olivia Langdon for two months, felt he should not use his own name, although the Langdon family, always firm supporters of the Rev. and Mrs. Beecher, certainly approved of the essay.

The Ministerial Union of Elmira, N.Y., at a recent meeting, passed resolutions disapproving the teachings of Rev. T. K. Beecher, declining to cooperate with him in his Sunday evening services at the Opera House, and requesting him to withdraw from their Monday morning meeting. This has resulted in his withdrawal, and thus the pastors are relieved from further responsibility as to his action.—*N.Y. Evangelist*.

Poor BEECHER! All this time he could do whatever he pleased that was wrong, and then be perfectly serene and comfortable over it, because the Ministerial Union of Elmira was responsible to GOD for it. He could lie, if he wished to, and those ministers had to answer for it; he could promote discord in the church of CHRIST, and those parties had to make it all right with the Deity as best they could; he could teach false doctrines to empty Opera Houses, and those sorrowing lambs of the Ministerial Union had to get out their sackcloth and ashes and stand responsible for it. He had such a comfortable thing of it! But he went too far. In an evil hour he slaughtered the simple geese that laid the golden egg of responsibility for him,—and now they will uncover their customary complacency and lift up their customary cackle in his behalf no more. And so, at last, he finds himself in the novel position of being responsible to GOD for his acts instead of to the Ministerial Union of Elmira. To say that this is appalling, is to state it with a degree of mildness which amounts to insipidity.

We cannot justly estimate this calamity, without first reviewing certain facts that conspired to bring it about. Mr. BEECHER was and is in the habit of preaching to a full congregation in the Independent Congregational Church in this city. The meeting-house was not large enough to accommodate all the people who desired admittance. Mr. BEECHER regularly attended the meetings of the Ministerial Union of Elmira every Monday morning and they received him into their fellowship and never objected to the doctrine which he taught in his church. So, in an unfortunate moment, he conceived the strange idea that they would connive at the teaching of the same doctrines in the same way in a larger house. Therefore he secured the Opera House and proceeded to preach there every Sunday evening to assemblages comprising from a thousand to fifteen hundred persons. He felt warranted in this course by a passage of Scripture which says: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature." Opera Houses were not ruled out specifically in this passage, and so he considered it proper to regard Opera Houses as a part of "all the world." He looked upon the people who assembled there as coming under the head of "every creature." These ideas were as absurd as they were far-fetched, but still they were the honest ebullitions of a diseased mind. His great mistake was in supposing that when he had the Savior's endorsement of his conduct, he had all that was necessary. He overlooked the fact that there might possibly be a conflict of opinion between the Savior and the Ministerial Union of Elmira. And there was. Wherefore, blind and foolish, Mr. BEECHER went to his destruction. The Ministerial Union withdrew their approbation, and left him dangling in the air with no other support than the countenance and approval of the gospel of Christ.

Mr. BEECHER invited his brother ministers to join forces with him and help him conduct the Opera House meetings. They declined with great unanimity. In this they were wrong. Since they did not approve of these meetings, it was a duty they owed to their consciences and their God to contrive their discontinuance. They knew this. They felt it. Yet they turned coldly away and refused to help at these meetings, when they well knew that their help, earnestly and persistently given, was able to kill any great religious enterprise that ever was conceived of.

The ministers refused, and the calamitous meetings at the Opera House continued—and not only continued but grew in interest and importance and sapped of their congregations churches where the gospel was preached with that sweet monotonous tranquility and that impen-

ettable profundity which stir up such consternation in the strongholds of sin. It is a pity to have to record here that one clergyman refused to preach in the Opera House at Mr. BEECHER's request, even when that incendiary was sick and disabled—and if that man's conscience justified him in that refusal, I do not. Under the plea of charity for a sick brother, he could have preached to that Opera House multitude a sermon that would have done incalculable damage to the Opera House experiment. And he need not have been particular about the sermon he chose, either. He could have relied on any he had in his barrel.

The Opera House meetings went on.—Other congregations were thin, and grew thinner, but the Opera House assemblages were vast. Every Sunday night, in spite of sense and reason, multitudes passed by other churches where they might have been saved, and marched deliberately to the Opera House to be damned. The community talked, talked, talked. Everybody discussed the fact that the Ministerial Union disapproved of the Opera House meetings; also that they disapproved of the teachings put forth there. And every body wondered **how** the Ministerial Union could tell whether to approve or disapprove of these teachings, seeing that those clergy men had **never attended an Opera House meeting**, and therefore didn't know **what** was taught there. Everybody wondered over that curious question—and they had to take it out in wondering.

Mr. BEECHER asked the Ministerial Union to state their objections to the Opera House matter. They could not—at least did not. He said to them that if they would come squarely out and tell him that they desired the discontinuance of those meetings, he would discontinue them. They declined to do that. Why should they have declined? They had no **right** to decline, and no **excuse** to decline, if they honestly believed that those meetings interfered in the slightest degree with the best interests of religion. (That is a proposition which the profoundest head among them cannot get around).

But the Opera House meetings **went on**. That was the mischief of it. And so, one Monday morning, when Mr. B. appeared at the usual Minister's meeting, his brother clergymen desired him to come there no more. He asked why. They gave no reason. They simply declined to have his company longer. Mr. B. said he could not accept of this execution without a trial, and since he loved them and had nothing against them, he must insist upon meeting with them in the future just the same as ever. And so after that, they met in secret, and thus got rid of this man's importunate affection.

The Ministerial Union had ruled out BEECHER—a point gained. He would get up an excitement about it in public. But that was a miscalculation. He never mentioned it. They waited and waited for the grand crash, but it never came. After all their labor pains, their ministerial mountain had brought forth only a mouse,—and a still-born one at that. BEECHER had not told on them—BEECHER malignantly persisted in not telling on them. The opportunity was slipping away. Alas for the humiliation of it, they had to come out and tell it themselves! And after all, their bombshell did not hurt anybody, when they did explode it. They had ceased to be responsible to God for BEECHER, and yet nobody seemed paralyzed about it. Some how, it was not even of sufficient importance, apparently, to get into the papers—though even the poor little facts that SMITH has bought a trotting team and Alderman JONES' child has the measles, are chronicled there with an avidity. Something **must** be done. As the Ministerial a Union had **told** about their desolate action when nobody else considered it of enough importance to tell, they would also **publish** it, now that the reporters failed to see anything in it important enough to print. And so they startled the entire religious world, no doubt, by solemnly printing in the *Evangelist* the paragraph which heads this article. They have got their excommunication bull started at last. It is going along quite lively, now and making considerable stir, let us hope. They even know it in Podunk wherever they may be. It excited a two line paragraph there. Happy, happy world, that knows at last that a little congress of congregationless clergymen of whom it had never heard before, have crushed a famous BEECHER and reduced his audiences from fifteen hundred down to fourteen hundred and seventy-five in one fell blow! Happy, happy world, that knows at last that these obscure innocents are no longer responsible for the blemishless teaching, the power, the pathos, the logic, and the other and manifold intellectual pyrotechnics that seduce but to damn the Opera House assemblages every night in Elmira! And miserable, O thrice miserable BEECHER!—for the Ministerial Union of Elmira will never, no never more be responsible to God for his shortcomings. (Excuse these tears.)

(For the protection of a man who is uniformly charged with all the newspaper devilry that sees the light in Elmira journals, I take this opportunity of stating, under oath, duly subscribed before a magistrate, that Mr. BEECHER did not write this article. And further, that he did not inspire it. And further still, the Ministerial Union of Elmira did not write it. And finally, the Ministerial Union did not ask me to write it.

No—I have taken up this cudgel in defense of the Ministerial Union of Elmira solely from a love of justice. Without solicitation, I have constituted myself the champion of the Ministerial Union of Elmira, and it shall be a labor of love with me to conduct their side of a quarrel in print for them whenever they desire me to do it—or if they are busy and have not time to ask me, I will cheerfully do it anyhow. In closing this, I must remark that if any question the right of the clergymen of Elmira to turn Mr. BEECHER out of the Ministerial Union, to such I answer that Mr. BEECHER re-created that institution after it had been dead for many years and invited those gentlemen to come into it—which they did, and so of course they have a right to turn him out if they want to. The difference between BEECHER and the man who put an adder in his bosom, is that BEECHER put in more adders than he did, and consequently had a proportionately livelier time of it when they got warmed up.)

Cheerfully,

S'CAT.

Elmira Weekly Advertiser, April 17, 1869

A New Beecher Church

by Mark Twain

When the present Park Church building was planned in 1871, Mark Twain wrote a description of the church plans in a letter to the New York Times entitled “The New Beecher Church.” This appeared in the Times on July 23, 1871 and was reprinted in the Elmira Daily Advertiser of July 25, 1871.

If Rev. Mr. Smith, or Rev. Mr. Jones, or Rev. Mr. Brown, were about to build a new church edifice it would be projected on the same old pattern, and be like pretty much all the other churches in the country, and so I would naturally mention it as a new Presbyterian Church, or a new Methodist, or a new Baptist Church, and never think of calling it by the pastor’s name; but when a Beecher projects a church, that edifice is necessarily going to be something entirely fresh and original. It is not going to be like any other church in the world; it is going to be as variegated, eccentric and marked with as peculiar and striking an individuality as a Beecher himself; it is going to have a deal more Beecher in it than any one narrow creed can fit in it without rattling, or any one arbitrary

order of architecture can symmetrically enclose and cover. Consequently, to call it a Congregational Church would not give half an idea of the thing. There is only one word broad enough and deep enough to take in the whole affair and express it clearly, luminously and concisely—and that is *Beecher*. The projected edifice I am about to speak of is, therefore, properly named in my caption as a new "*Beecher Church*."

The projector is Rev. THOMAS K. BEECHER—brother of the other one, of course—I never knew but one Beecher that wasn't and he was a nephew. The new church is to be built in Elmira, N.Y., where Mr. BEECHER has been preaching to one and the same congregation for the last sixteen years, and is thoroughly esteemed and beloved by his people. I have had opportunity to hear all about the new church, for I have lately been visiting in Elmira.

Now, when one has that disease which gives its possessor the title of "humorist," he must make oath to his statements, else the public will not believe him. Therefore, I make solemn oath that what I am going to tell about the new church is the strict truth.

The main building—for there are to be three massed together in a large grassy square, ornamented with quite a forest of shade trees—will be the church proper. It will be lofty, in order to secure good air and ventilation. The auditorium will be circular—an amphitheatre, after the ordinary pattern of an opera-house, without galleries. It is to seat a thousand persons. On one side (or one end, if you choose) will be an ample raised platform for the minister, the rear half of which will be occupied by the organ and the choir. Before the minister will be the circling amphitheatre of pews, the first thirty or forty on the level floor, and the next raising in graduated tiers to the walls. The seats on the level floor will be occupied by the aged and infirm, who can enter the church through a hall under the speaker's platform without climbing any stairs. The people occupying the raised tiers will enter by a dozen doors opening into the church from a lobby like an opera-house lobby, and descend the various aisles to their places. In case of fire or earthquakes, these numerous exits will be convenient and useful.

No space is to be wasted. Under the raised tiers of pews are to be stalls for horses and carriages, so that these may be sheltered from sun and rain. There will be twenty-four of these stalls, each stall to be entered by an arch of ornamental masonry—no doors to open or shut. Consequently the outside base of the church will have a formidable port-holed look, like a man-of-war. The stalls are to be so nailed with "deadeners,"

and so thoroughly plastered, that neither sound nor smell can ascend to the church and offend the worshippers. The horses will be in attendance at church but an hour or two at a time, or course, and can defile the stalls but little; an immediate cleansing after they leave is to set that all right again.

There is to be no steeple on the church—merely because no practical use can be made of it.

There is to be no bell, because any ignoramus knows what time church service begins without that exasperating nuisance. In explanation of this remark, I will state that at home I suffer in the vicinity and under the distracting clangor of thirteen church bells, all of whom (is that right?) clamor all at once, and no two in accord. A large part of my most valuable time is taken up in devising cruel and unusual sufferings, and, in fancy, inflicting them on those bell-ringers, and having a good time.

The second building is to be less lofty than the church; is to be built right against the rear of it, and communicate with it by a door. It is to have two stories. On the first floor will be three distinct Sunday-school rooms—all large, but one considerably larger than the other two. The Sunday-school connected with Mr. BEECHER's church has always been a "graded" one, and each department singularly thorough in its grade of instruction; the pupil wins his advancement to the higher grades by hard-won proficiency, not by mere added years. The largest of the three compartments will be used as the main Sunday-school room, and for the week-day evening lecture.

The whole upper story of this large building will be well lighted and ventilated, and occupied wholly as a play-room for the children of the church, and it will stand open and welcome to them through all the week days. They can fill it with their playthings if they choose, and besides it will be furnished with dumb bells, swings, rocking horses, and all such matters as children delight in. The idea is to make a child look upon a church as only another home, and a sunny one, rather than as a dismal exile or prison.

The third building will be less lofty than the second; it will adjoin the rear of the second, and communicate with it by a door or doors. It will consist of three stories. Like the other two buildings, it will cover considerable ground. On the first floor will be the "church parlors," where the usual social gatherings of modern congregations are held. On the same floor, and opening into the parlors, will be a reception-room, and also a circulating library—a free library—not simply free to the

church membership, but to everybody, just as is the present library of Mr. Beecher's church (and few libraries are more extensively and more diligently and gratefully used than this one.) Also, on this floor, and communicating with the parlors, will be—tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Askalon!—six **bath-rooms!**—hot and cold water—free tickets issued to any applicant among the unclean of the congregation! The idea is sound and sensible, for this reason: Many members of all congregations have no good bathing facilities, and are not able to pay for them at the barber-shops without feeling the expense; and yet a luxurious bath is a thing that all civilized beings greatly enjoy and derive healthful benefit from. The church buildings are to be heated by steam, and consequently the waste steam can be very judiciously utilized in the proposed bath-rooms. In speaking of this bath-room project, I have revealed a state secret—but I never could keep one of any kind, state or otherwise. Even the congregation were not to know of this matter; the building committee were to leave it unmentioned in their report; but I got hold of it—and from a member of that committee, too—and I had rather part with one of my hind legs than keep still about it. The bath-rooms are unquestionably to be built and so why not tell it?

In the second story of this third building will be the permanent home of the "Church missionary," a lady who constantly looks after the poor and sick of the Church; also a set of lodgings and living rooms for the janitors (or janitresses(?) for they will be women, Mr. BEECHER holding that women are tidier and more efficient in such a position than men, and that they ought to dwell upon the premises and give them their undivided care;) also, on this second floor are to be six rooms to do duty as a church infirmary for the sick and poor of the congregation, this Church having always supported and taken care of its own unfortunates, instead of leaving them to the public charity. In the infirmary will be kept one or two water-beds (for invalids whose pains will not allow them to lie on a less yielding substance) and half a dozen reclining invalid-chairs on wheels.—The water-beds and invalid-chairs at present belonging to the church are always in demand, and never out of service. Part of the appurtenances of the new church will be a horse and easy vehicle, to be kept and driven by a janitor, and used wholly for giving the church's indigent invalids air and exercise. It is found that such an establishment is daily needed—so much so, indeed, as to almost amount to a church necessity.

The third story of this building is to be occupied as the church kitchen, and it is sensibly placed aloft, so that the ascending noises and

boarding-house smells shall go up and aggravate the birds instead of the saints—except such of the latter as are above the clouds, and they can easily keep out of the way of it, no doubt. Dumb-waiters will carry the food down to the church parlors instead of up. Why is it that nobody has thought of the simple wisdom of this arrangement before? Is it for a church to step forward and tell us how to get rid of kitchen smells and noises? If it be asked why the new church will need a kitchen, I remind the reader of the infirmary occupants, &c. They must eat; and, beside, social gatherings of members of this congregation meet at the church parlors as often as three and four evenings a week, and sew, drink tea, and g____. G____. It commences with g, I think, but somehow I cannot think of the word. The new church parlors will be large, and it is intended that these social gathers shall be promoted and encouraged, and that they shall take on an added phase, viz.: When several families want to indulge in a little reunion, and have not room in their small houses at home, they can have it in the church parlors. You will notice in every feature of this new church one predominant idea and purpose always discernible—the banding together of the congregation as a family, and the making of the church a home. You see it in the play-room, the library, the parlors, the baths, the infirmary—it is everywhere. It is the great central ruling idea. To entirely consummate such a thing would be impossible with nearly any other congregation in the Union; but after sixteen years of moulding and teaching, Mr. BEECHER has made it wholly possible and practicable with this one. It is not stretching metaphor too far to say that he is the father of his people, and his church their mother.

If the new church project is a curiosity, it is still but an inferior curiosity compared to the plan of raising money for it. One could have told with his eyes shut and one hand tied behind him, that it originated with a BEECHER—I was going to say with a lunatic, but the success of the plan robs me of the opportunity.

When it was decided to build a new church edifice, at a cost of not less than \$40,000 nor more than \$50,000 (for the membership is not 350 strong, and there are not six men in it who can strictly be called rich) Mr. BEECHER gave to each member a printed circular, inclosed in an envelope, prepaid and addressed to himself, to be returned through the Post-office:

[Confidential.]

It is proposed to build a meeting house and other rooms for the use of the church. To do this work honestly and well, it is proposed to spend one year in raising a part of the money in advance, and in getting plans and making contracts.

- One year, plans and contracts April 1, 1871 to 1872
- One year, build and cover in April 1, 1872 to 1873
- One year, plaster, finish and furnish April 1, 1873 to 1874
- One year, pay for in full and dedicate April 1, 1874 to 1875

It is proposed to expend not less than \$20,000, nor more than \$50,000, according to the ability shown by the returns of these cards of confidential subscription. Any member of the church and congregation, or any friend of the church, is allowed and invited to subscribe. But no one is urged.

T.K. BEECHER, Pastor

To help build our meeting-house I think I shall be able to give
 Not less than \$and
 Not more than \$
 Each year for four years, beginning April 1, 1871.
 Or I can make one payment \$
 Trusting in the Lord to help me, I hereby subscribe the same as noted above.

Name.....
 Residence

The subscriptions were to be wholly **voluntary** and strictly **confidential**; no one was to know the amount of a man's subscription except himself and the minister; nobody was urged to give anything at all; all were simply invited to give whatever sum they felt was right and just, from ten cents upward, and no questions asked, no criticisms made, no revealments uttered. There was no possible chance for glory, for even though a man gave his whole fortune, nobody would ever know it. I do not know where anything has struck me as being so Utopian, so absurdly romantic, so ignorant, on its face, of human nature. And so anybody would have thought. Parties said Mr. BEECHER had "educated" his people, and that each would give as he privately felt able, and not bother about the glory. I believed human nature to be a more potent educator than any minister, and that the result would show it. But I was

wrong. At the end of a month or two, some two-thirds of the circulars had wended back, one by one to the pastor, silently and secretly through the post-office, and then, without mentioning the name of the giver, or the amount of his gift, Mr. BEECHER announced from the pulpit that all the money needed was pledged—the amount being over \$45,000, and the possible amount over \$53,000! When the remainder of the circulars have come in, it is confidently expected and believed that they will add to these amounts a sum of not less than \$10,000. A great many subscriptions from children and working men consisted of cash inclosures, ranging from a ten-cent currency stamp up to five, ten, and fifteen dollars. As I said before, the plan of levying the building tax, and the success of the plan, are much more curious and surprising than the exceedingly curious edifice the money is to create.

The reason the moneys are to be paid in four annual instalments—for that is the plan—is partly to make the payments easy, but chiefly because the church is to be substantially built, and its several parts allowed time to settle and season, each in its turn. For instance, the super structures will be allowed a good part of the first year to settle and compact themselves after completion; the walls the second year, and so forth and so on. There is to be no work done by contract, and no unseasoned wood used. The materials are to be sound and good, and honest, competent, conscientious workmen (BEECHER says there are such, the opinion of the world to the contrary, notwithstanding,) hired at full wages, by the day to put them together.

The above statements are all true and genuine, according to the oath I have already made, thereto, and which I am now about to repeat before a notary, in legal form, with my hand upon the book. Consequently we are going to have at least one sensible, but very, very curious church in America.

I am aware that I had no business to tell all these matters, but the reporter instinct was strong upon me, and I could not help it. And besides they were in everybody's mouth in Elmira, anyway. —

BUFFALO, June, 1871.

The Elmira Daily Advertiser, July 25, 1871.

Mark Twain's Elmira

by Max Eastman

Max Eastman and his sister, Crystal, grew up in the apartment in the Park Church during the years when their parents, the Rev. Samuel E. Eastman and the Rev. Annis Ford Eastman were first assistants to Thomas K. Beecher and then succeeded him as joint pastors of the church. Max Eastman wrote with perception about the influence of the Park Church, Thomas and Julia Beecher, the Langdon family and Elmira on Mark Twain in an essay entitled "Mark Twain's Elmira," first published in Harper's Magazine, Volume 176 (1938), pp. 620-632. He used the same essay, with some editing, as a chapter in his book, Heroes I Have Known, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1942. The essay is reprinted here with the permission of Mrs. Yvette Eastman.

In 1894 my mother, who was a gifted and quite celebrated minister of the gospel, was called to be associate pastor of the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher in the Park Church at Elmira, New York. Thomas K. Beecher was a half-brother of Henry Ward, and by contrast to him a very whole man. He had summoned in 1889 the Congregational council, which somewhat high-handedly, in view of her rapid flight over theological education, ordained my mother, and he had been her strong friend and champion ever since. He said more than once that she had preached the greatest sermons he ever heard. My father was a minister too, but his health had failed, and at the time when we moved to Elmira it was doubtful whether he would be able to preach at all. The Park Church was extraordinary in many ways, and one extraordinary thing about it was that the parsonage was a duplex apartment, or at least two corridors of rooms, within the church building. I was eleven years old when we moved in there, and whatever sins and rebellions I may have committed since I am sure you will forgive when you realize that, besides being the son of two ministers—and the grandson of a third—I was from the age of eleven to seventeen in all essential respects, at least so far as concerns my place in nature and society, a church mouse.

Although so unfavorably placed externally, I was in a rare position for the growth and cultivation of a mind. I was at the exact center of one of the most interesting clusters of people and ideas that American churchdom ever produced or found room to contain. They happened,

moreover, to be the same people and ideas that Mark Twain had absorbed into himself by marriage twenty-five years before. His wife's family, the Langdons, lived just across the street from the church, and they were not only the central pillars but the foundation stones upon which the church had been built. The portrait of Olivia Clemens' mother still hangs over the fireplace in the church parlors, and the memory of her father is one with the church's memory. "So long as Park Church stands," reads a brochure published on its fiftieth anniversary, "the names of Mr. and Mrs. Langdon will be held in grateful memory." Ida Langdon, Olivia's niece, was an adored friend of our family and my sister's boon companion for years. I myself belonged to Jean Clemens' Humane Society and was even nominated—and got one vote—for vice-president. I met Mark Twain himself in the pews of the Park Church and heard him make a speech from my mother's pulpit. Mrs. Theodore Crane, Olivia Clemens' sister, who lived up on Quarry Farm where Mark Twain wrote *Tom Sawyer*, was one of the people whom my mother loved best in the world. My mother, with Mr. Beecher, officiated at the lonely funeral of Mark Twain's beloved daughter, Suzie, in 1896. My father, standing beside Mark Twain, offered the prayer at the burial of his wife, Olivia. And when Mark Twain himself died it was again my father, reading an appropriate service which my mother had written for him, who spoke the last words over the body of that great infidel.

I give these disconnected facts because, without naming over a great many names which would mean nothing to an outsider, I cannot explain with what exactitude fate landed me at the age of eleven in the mathematical center of what I may call Mark Twain's Elmira. As the influence of that Elmira upon Mark Twain has become a considerable question in our literary history, and the question has been debated thus far without inquiry into the concrete facts, I am going to describe in some detail the extraordinary cultural situation into which Mark Twain arrived by marriage in 1869, and which was substantially unchanged when I came there twenty-five years later.

This will enable me, among other things, to show my friend Van Wyck Brooks why I am distrustful of "The Literary Mind"—for Brooks has spoken impatient words about my book on that subject. The Literary Mind, being interested in ideas so largely because of their immediate flavor and the work of art that can be made of them, is often very cavalier about their relations to actual fact. In his book *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* Van Wyck Brooks made a work of art like an historical novel out

of the idea that Mark Twain was a “balked personality,” a great creative genius that owing to its American environment never “found itself.” In the course of his novel he comes in idea to Elmira, just as I came there in fact, and he thus describes the local situation.

Perhaps you know Elmira? Perhaps, in any case, you can imagine it? Those “up-State” towns have a civilization all their own; without the traditions of moral freedom and intellectual culture which New England has never quite lost, they had been so salted down with the spoils of a conservative industrial life that they had attained by the middle of the nineteenth century, a social stratification as absolute as that of New England itself. A stagnant fresh-water aristocracy, one and seven-eighths or two and a quarter generations deep, densely provincial, resting on a basis of angular sectarianism, eviscerated politics and raw money, ruled the roost, imposing upon all the rest of society its own type, forcing all to submit to it or to imitate it.

About Olivia Langdon whom Mark Twain married, Van Wyck Brooks also has an idea—namely that she was “the daughter of a wealthy coal-dealer and mine-owner.” And from that abstraction, so familiar in radical cartoons, he develops the following portrait:

Mark Twain had not married an awakened soul; he had married a young girl without experience, without imagination, who had never questioned anything, who had never been conscious of any will apart from that of her parents, her relatives, her friends. To win her approval and pride ... he had to win the approval and the pride of Elmira itself—of all that vast and intricate system of privilege and convention of which Elmira was the symbol.

Now it happens that Jervis Langdon, Olivia’s father, taken in the concrete, was one of the most un-coal-dealer-and-mine-owner-like characters that ever got ahead in business. As a wealthy merchant he was not only a “sport,” but a prodigy. In the first place, he lived about half his life as a country storekeeper, and one with a reputation for such fantastic acts of generosity parading in the guise of “simple justice” that you would hardly think he could get on at all. In the second place, when he got rich he did not alter these fantastic habits by a hair. When sued, for instance, by a prominent Philadelphia attorney, he gathered up and sent to him all the documents that would be of help to the plaintiff, saying that he wanted the case decided only on its merits. In the third place, he was an ardent abolitionist, and in days of wealth and poverty alike held his house and his pockets open to illegally escaping slaves. The story of his life was related by Thomas K. Beecher at a crowded memorial meeting held in the Elmira Opera House two weeks after he died, and it reads like a tale from the days of chivalry. Of his seventeen paragraphs in peroration, I will quote but six.

To do humble tasks faithfully, with or without pay;

To welcome partners when partners were needed, and leave them in sole possession, when they seemed to desire it;

To serve employers so faithfully that the memory of the service remains indelible after the lapse of thirty years; ...

To befriend the friendless and champion the oppressed with the full measure of one man’s resources, be the same large or small;

To walk so generously that envy’s self was silenced at sight of his prosperity, so many were sharing in it. ...

In short, to have led a life of varied and amazing activity, through forty-five years, and at last to enter into rest, leaving upon earth not one voice to impeach his integrity, nor one acquaintance without regret for his going, nor one friend that is not proudly heart-stricken at loss of him;

These, and things like these, were the ornaments and lessons of his life. I but gather them together as decorations for his memory.

That was the father of Olivia Clemens as seen by one of the most radical preachers of the time. Her mother was almost equally surprising, and she too was celebrated by Mr. Beecher in a memorial sermon when she died. After reminding his audience that she and her husband had formed the head and front of the little group of abolitionists which split off from the Presbyterians in 1846 on the slavery issue, and formed the church in which he was speaking, Mr. Beecher continued:

Forty-one years ago it was a costly matter to profess any interest in colored men, or disapproval of their enslavement, or to mention them in prayer. And when, in stormy times, a little company of Christians banded themselves together to form a new church in this community, it was an act which cost them social ostracism and contempt ... To women such ostracism is a distress, that can be bravely borne by them only who have found a better strength than *society*. Mrs. Langdon has this better strength. Though always weak in the flesh, yet she was strong and unflinching in generous courage and determination. The Langdon house, however small, had room in it for abolitionists—Garrison, Phillips, Quincy, Johnson, Gerrit Smith, Foster, Frederick Douglas[s]. The family horse and purse were at the service of fugitives from slavery. ...

You see how far we are from “those up-State towns ... without traditions of moral freedom and intellectual culture”—how far from a “stagnant, freshwater aristocracy, densely provincial, resting on a basis of angular sectarianism, eviscerated politics, and raw money”? As far, namely, as we can get.

II

But that is not all. That is not half the story of Mark Twain's extraordinary Elmira. The central figure in that Elmira, the dominant and molding intellectual and spiritual force, not only to Olivia Langdon, but in large measure to Mark Twain himself, was this same eloquent and great Beecher whose words we have been reading—a man of more than Mark Twain's stature, you must realize, in the minds of those around them. Mr. Beecher did not call himself a minister of the gospel. He called himself "Teacher of the Park Church"; and a whole rebel character and thought of life lay behind that choice. His thought was to live and be helpful in the community as a modern Jesus would, a downright, realistic, iconoclastic, life-loving Jesus, with a scientific training and a sense of humor and a fund of common sense. He was, in fact, a very eloquent preacher, more eloquent to a lucid listener than his famous brother, Henry Ward. But unlike Henry, and perhaps in part because of Henry's glibness, he did not believe in preaching. When he was invited to the Park Church in 1854 he replied with a letter laying down in almost imperious terms, as though putting all Christian churchdom on trial, the conditions upon which he would accept a call to any church.

Do you remember that I do not think good
can be done by a preacher's preaching? It must
be by Christians working that good is done, if
at all... Do you remember this, yes or no?

One Sunday Thomas somewhat unexpectedly substituted for Henry in his famous Plymouth Church, and when he rose in the pulpit a good number of the vast audience got up to go. He stopped them with his hand.

"Those," he said, "who came here to worship Henry Ward Beecher are excused. Those who wish to worship God will remain."

The man was masterful, humorous, poised upon himself although impetuous, and endowed with a supreme contempt for fame, money, and "success." He declined calls to our greatest metropolitan churches because he had "found love" in Elmira and created there a church in his own free-moving and magnanimous image. He belonged to the second Beecher brood, those with more integrity and less sentimentalism than the children of Roxana Foote. They all had genius; they all had unconventional and imposing force; they all had large-featured

good looks and magnetism. He was the best-looking and the brainiest—possessing, according to old Lyman himself, “quickness, depth, and comprehension of discrimination surpassing almost any mind I have come in contact with”—and he had by far the most distinguished gift of expression. You rarely come upon a surviving sentence of his that does not have individuality and convey the impact of an edged and forceful mind. These, for instance, quoted in a pamphlet by an irate colleague:

We do not care to argue, we simply assert that manly character cannot be developed in any human being who stands in fear of public sentiment. We make no account of it whatever among the instrumentalities which we use as a Christian pastor and teacher. When it opposes us, we defy it in the name of conscience. When it favors us, we regret the feebleness which such help entails upon manhood.

As Paxton Hibben says, he “voiced with least circumlocution what so many clergymen felt.” Voicing without circumlocution was the essence of the man.

Do you remember that while in good faith I profess to you that I am sound and evangelic in doctrine, yet I have no ambition to found, or foster or preserve a church as such? My exclusive aim is to help men as individuals to be Christians. No church prosperity dazzles me; no church poverty or adversity troubles me.

Do you remember this, yes or no?

Pardon my plain speech. Truth is at the bottom of all enduring love. Though I speak bold words, yet my heart is very tender and very tired and would fain find rest in just some such place as Elmira.

Thus he approached his second parish, having been thrown out of his first for discovering a shady money deal among its leading members and threatening them with exposure if they did not stop. The little

group of abolitionists in Elmira liked his abrupt but considerate advance-notice of general rebellion against respectability and tradition. They accepted all his terms. “The next Sunday morning,” writes Lyman Beecher Stowe, “amid the expectant hush of curiosity that always precedes the arrival of a new minister, there strode up the center aisle of the First Congregational Church of Elmira a tall, slender, handsome young man who, tossing a felt visor cap onto a chair, mounted the pulpit and opened the services. The tossing of that cap was an unconscious challenge to the traditionlists of the town which they were quick to accept.”

In further challenge to the traditionalists, he made this announcement to his congregation:

I cannot make pastoral calls. I am not constructed so that I can. But I am yours all times of the day and night when you want anything of me. If you are sick and need a watcher I will watch with you. If you are poor and need some one to saw wood for you I will saw wood for you. I can read the paper for you if you need somebody to do that. I am yours, but you must call me the same as you would a physician.

Adhering to that program Mr. Beecher became as much a man-of-all-work as a pastor to his congregation. He was a thoroughly trained mechanic and locomotive engineer, able to build a house and handle and repair anything from a ship to a railroad train, and he served his parishioners as carpenter, painter, paper-hanger, clock and sewing-machine mender. For forty years he wound and set the Elmira town clock, keeping it in pace with the sun by means of observations made with his own instruments on famous East Hill half way up to Quarry Farm. He preached no doctrine but the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, and he walked about Elmira in ordinary and usually very old clothes like a workman, carrying when necessary a sewing-machine or even a sofa on his back, and never taking off that cap with the big visor—never surrendering to the traditionalists. It was a railroad man’s cap, or nearer that than anything else, and his head was so big that it had to be made to order by a special hatter. And the hatter—throughout the fifty years of its service as a symbol of his revolt against the traditionalists—was Olivia Clemens’ exquisite and dearly beloved sister, Susan Langdon Crane!

You see how far we are from being “so salted down with the spoils of conservative industrial life,” that we have “attained a social stratification as absolute as that of New England itself.” I think Van Wyck Brooks has grown vastly in his apprehensions of reality since he wrote *The Ordeal of Mark Twain*, and I must specify it is the book and not the author I am refuting. But the book is wrong. The reality of Mark Twain’s Elmira, if you want to compare it with New England, is that it was formed and molded spiritually by a son whose father, old Lyman Beecher, had represented New Englandism at its crabbedest and worst—prohibition, anti-abolition, anti-feminism, anti-Unitarianism, anti-Catholicism, anti-everything except Calvinistic sectarianism—and whose own character had for its axis a complete and sovereign revolt against every article of that attitude to life.

Mr. Beecher was not only a man of all work; he was a man of all play. He was a skilled bowler and cricket-player; he joined a whist club and organized a baseball team called the Lively Turtles, which scandalized the churchmen by not even taking baseball seriously. He sang college songs and played them on the church organ. He attended theaters, and played pool and billiards, and even installed a pool table in the church parlors. Although the original charter of his church declared for the “unfermented juice of the grape” in communions, and further affirmed that “no intoxicating liquors shall be used by the members,” he strolled into a saloon when he felt like it and took a glass of beer. In fact, he made this a permanent revolution by installing his own private mug in a favorite saloon as others did in barber shops.

He ran a weekly column in the local paper—a pioneer in this field too—joining the politicians’ battles with a sword of truth that slashed both ways, and like an Early Christian Walter Winchell, naming those who scandalized him by their proper names. The prohibitionists scandalized him with their straitlaced lies, and with the remark that this country is “too sunshiny and roomy” for all that ranting to be true, he took his public stand behind the liquor dealers. Still better, when he changed his mind on this in after years, he said that too. The extreme to which he dared to follow his conception of a Christian life is revealed in his befriending of a notorious prostitute, whom he finally, to the horror of his neighbors, took into his house and treated as a daughter until she gained her poise and married and went away.

It is needless to describe the raw hate aroused by these consummate blasphemies among the surrounding Apostles of Christ Jesus.

Beecher and his church were regarded as a moral ulcer eating up the harvest of the gospel throughout the whole Chemung and Susquehanna valleys. When his Sunday evening meetings grew too big for the old meeting-house, and he crowned his sins by hiring the local theater, actually inviting in vast crowds to offer prayers to God in that Satanic edifice, the storm broke on this “Opera House preacher” from all sides. He was expelled from the Ministerial Union and denounced from every pulpit in the city. He made no public answer to the fulminations of the ministers but embarrassed them in private with an extra-Christlike courtesy.

Jervis Langdon stood behind him like a rock. “My purse is open to you,” he had said, “you can do more good with it than I can.” And he now headed a movement to buy shares in the Opera House to ensure the future of this outrage. Mark Twain himself stood by him—not the Mark Twain you know, but just a well-known wit and travel writer who had married into the Langdon family. “Happy, happy world,” he wrote in the *Elmira Advertiser*, “that knows at last that a little congress of congregationless clergymen, of whom it never heard before, have crushed a famous Beecher and reduced his audiences from fifteen hundred down to fourteen hundred and seventy-five in one fell blow!”

When the crowds on Sunday morning overflowed the church also, Mr. Beecher further shocked the prelates by abandoning his church and meeting his congregation in a little public park outside the city. And to crown that crime he helped the street railway get special permission to run cars out to the park in violation of the Sunday laws, and he himself came out there to preach the gospel dressed in white ducks and a white felt hat.

Far deeper than these evidences of realistic good sense, two things distinguished Thomas K. Beecher from all other great American ministers. First he was a man of science. I have described his accomplishments in practical astronomy and mechanics. They were linked with a theoretical passion which had all but diverted him from the ministerial calling and which kept him in the forefront of the march of scientific inquiry throughout his life. Together with Professor Farrar of Elmira College, he founded an Elmira Academy of Sciences, which corresponded with the Royal Academy in London—with Tyndall, Darwin, Huxley! Remember that Huxley’s war with England’s churchmen was at its height while Olivia Clemens’ pastor was founding this academy in Elmira, and you will realize how wide of the mark it is to describe her environment as “densely provincial.” Intellectually it was the least provincial environ-

ment to be found in all American churchdom, and I dare say British churchdom might be thrown in too.

The other thing which distinguished Mr. Beecher from all other men in the annals of our pulpit was the scope of his magnanimity, his absolute rejection, not of “angular sectarianism,” but of all sectarianism whatsoever. He not only invited men of all denominations to become members of his church; he invited the members of his church to leave for no matter what trivial reasons of convenience and go and join some other. In his book *Our Seven Churches*, religious tolerance, a rare substance in any solution, is presented in pure essence. It is, so far as my knowledge goes, a unique book, a book similar in spirit as well as in the date upon its fading flyleaf to Walt Whitman’s world-embracing mystic vision, a book that dropped unnoticed into an age absolutely deaf to so lofty and magnanimous an evangel.

All these wildly sensible acts and this great-hearted thinking—in which, if you know anything about American churchdom of the period, you will recognize the outlines of a cultural revolution—culminated in 1872 in the raising of sixty-five thousand dollars to build a new church after Mr. Beecher’s own heart. The sum was doubled by the Langdon family, and the new church, which extended through a whole block with entrances on two streets, was the largest in that region, as well as probably the most progressive in America.

It is inadequate to say, although I believe it is true, that the Park Church was the first “institutional church” in the country. It was a great deal more than that. Mr. Beecher himself called it a “home church” and tried to make it a place where Christians of all creeds or no creed could feel that they “belonged” as a man belongs at his own fireside. The church had a kitchen equipped with china and silver for two or three hundred, “parlors” available to any who wished to use them, a free public library, pool and billiard tables, a dancing hall and children’s “Romp Room” with a stage and the complete fittings of a theater. All this in 1873! There would be a “picnic supper” every week, and a “pay supper” every month. Every fourth Sunday would be Children’s Sunday, and the grown-up folks could stay at home or come and hear a “children’s sermon.” At other times the Sunday School would meet in the main auditorium following the morning service, and after a preliminary exercise in common, the children would march to gay music on the organ to their separate rooms and places of assembly. Mrs. Beecher remembered a Sunday back in the seventies when they marched to the tune of “Captain

Jinx of the Horse Marines,” and I remember a day when our eccentric organist, George B. Carter, sent us skipping with a medley composed of “Onward Christian Soldiers” and “There’ll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight.” Some shook their heads and smiled, but there was no indignant gossip; nobody was disturbed. A humorous informalism, a being at ease with your play instincts, was characteristic of all the Beechers—even austere old Lyman having been a brilliant performer of the double shuffle. It was equally characteristic of Mrs. Beecher—“my strong, courageous, energetic Julia,” as he called her, “to whom belongs the credit for nine-tenths of the achievement of our long life in Elmira.” Her energetic whims and impulses of geniality, and what might be called dynamic common sense, were uncontrollable by any feeling except the fear that she might really hurt somebody’s feelings.

III

A word about Mrs. Beecher is essential to my theme because, among so many other things, she was Olivia’s Sunday School teacher. My mother, in a brochure called *A Flower of Puritanism* described this most unusual Sunday School teacher as combining a New England conscience with a Greek love of beauty—and she might have added, with a timeless sense of fun. She was a granddaughter of Noah Webster and, like old Noah, rich in whims and talents. She invented, one day when she was darning an old stocking, a species of rag doll which became celebrated for its plump and genial superiority to circumstance, and by turning herself into a veritable factory for these “Beecher dolls” kept a lifelong stream of money pouring from her hands to charity. She made sculptures too and comic drawings and queer birds and beasts out of roots and autumn tassels, grotesque things that Mark Twain called Jabbawocks. These too she would auction off for charity, and on one occasion Mark Twain functioned as the auctioneer.

When I think of Mrs. Beecher I see always the sweet and faithful firmness of the closure of her lips. And as I look, she jumps suddenly up to be on her way in endless labors for the suffering, sick, and ignorant with brisk, imperious, selfless energy. An admirer once said to her: “I love to see you pour coffee, because you do it with such indiscriminate fury!” With the same indiscriminate fury she would gather up the dishes after a meal, scrape them, and pile them to save labor for someone in the kitchen. “Your plate!” She would exclaim suddenly, stretching out a commanding hand to the astonished guest.

Mrs. Beecher was quite as headstrong as her husband in smashing through forms and conventions, and her rebellion was not only moral but aesthetic. She bobbed her hair in 1857, anticipating Irene Castle by about sixty years, and imparting to her beauty a quality as startling to her neighbors as though a cherub had alighted in their city. And she used to invade its stuffy parlors like a whirlwind, clearing out the mid-Victorian junk.

“Why do you have all those *little* things on that wall?” she would exclaim. “Don’t you see how much better one big simple picture would look?”

To distinguish her yet more as a Sunday School teacher of the “Genteel Female,” Mrs. Beecher wore congress shoes with low flat heels. She kept up a kind of hilarious joy in her pupils too because she could not herself, with all her talents, learn a Bible verse by heart, not if she spent the week on it, and she was desperately honest about such things. Moreover, just as her Puritan morals were tempered with a pagan love of beauty, her New England piety was mingled with a wayward humor very much belonging to this earth. Once she said to Mr. Beecher at a meeting of Sunday School teachers:

“I believe if we prayed *all night long* the way the old-fashioned Christians did, we would really get what we prayed for!”

“Why don’t you try it?” he said.

“Well, I wouldn’t want to lose a night’s sleep on an uncertainty.”

On another occasion she and Mr. Beecher, hastening to an appointment at the Reformatory, were held up by a long freight train, which suddenly parted exactly at the crossing.

“O Tom,” she cried, “I’m sorry I didn’t pray, it would have been such a good answer!”

Mrs. Beecher and my mother were the closest of friends, and their friendship consisted largely of a voyage together, and in the company of Emerson and William Morris and Walt Whitman, beyond the confines of churchly ethics and religion. “She was eager to assimilate the results of scientific research in every field,” my mother writes, and adds that “when any old doctrine that she could no longer hold was under discussion, she would say: ‘But it was necessary in its time.’” I cherish the image of her sitting by my mother’s hammock beside a brook reading aloud, with an expression of grim and yet joyful determination in her gentle features, the Calamus poems in Walt Whitman’s *Song of Myself*.

That perhaps will give the reader some notion how completely, for those who knew her, the thought of this extraordinary woman as Olivia Langdon's Sunday School teacher explodes the myth about the elegant, conventional, and formal training of that so abstract "daughter of a wealthy coal-dealer and mine-owner" whom Mark Twain so concretely loved. Indeed, it is not only Van Wyck Brooks who is talking in the air on this subject. DeVoto, in the very process of confuting Brooks, perpetuates the portrait of a prim and formalized Victorian female, "completely drilled in the gentilities," and by implication drilled in nothing else. Edward Wagenknecht, although more judicial than either Brooks or DeVoto, attributes to her the same "limited, upper bourgeois standpoint of Elmira." And the error has its source in the official biographer, Albert Bigelow Paine, who says:

"She sensed his heresy toward the conventions and forms which had been her gospel ... she suspected that he might even have unorthodox views about religion."

Olivia's gospel, in so far as she learned it from the church in which her mother and father were the central social and financial force, was one of self-reliant revolt against forms and conventions as such, and if she suspected that Mark Twain had unorthodox views about religion, that could only have helped him to fit into the environment in which she had been born and reared. For her own mother was perhaps as unorthodox as anybody in Mr. Beecher's extremely free-thinking congregation.

"I have not concealed from you," he says in his memorial sermon, "nor have I proclaimed, that her views not infrequently diverged from those of her pastor."

That her views did not diverge in the direction of orthodoxy may be gathered from her answer to a question that he put to her upon her deathbed.

"No," she said, "it is all dark to me. It's like lifting a great stone and looking into a cave. But it will be as God wills and I shall be satisfied."

Knowing that about Olivia's mother, you see how misleading is a passage like this from Mr. Wagenknecht about Olivia and Mark Twain:

The truth is that she herself was growing less orthodox until once, in a time of bereavement when he said, "Livy, if it comforts you to lean on the Christian faith do so," she replied,

“I can’t, Youth. I haven’t any.” How could he with the hypersensitive conscience of his, fail to upbraid himself afresh, to count this as another wrong he had put upon her, another deprivation he had brought her to suffer?

IV

Almost everything that has been inferred from this abstract El-mira, and this abstract daughter of an abstract rich business man, is as misleading as that or more so. Her family were of course “bourgeois,” but that after all does not describe a species. Even the orthodox Marxist knows better than to infer individuals from social categories, as indeed he must, seeing that Marx himself was bourgeois and his co-worker Engels a “rich business man.” Mark Twain, moreover, was far from being a proletarian. He was a mixture of the Southern gentlemen and the Western pioneer, had fought a bit with the Confederate Army while his future father and mother-in-law were helping to free slaves, had dropped the war with a masterly nonchalance, gone West to make a fortune, and come back without a fortune, but with humorous genius and a brilliant idea. A new and peculiarly Western American way of “shocking the bourgeois” was the idea. It made *The Innocents Abroad* “a daring book,” as Mr. Paine says, and one “calculated to take the breath of the orthodox reader” but not by any means so pointed in its daring, nor so breath-taking to the orthodox, as the life and teachings of Thomas K. Beecher, by whose warm light Olivia Langdon lived and grew. There was, in short—and in not too Marxian language—a hardier and deeper-grounded “radicalism” in the Park Church culture into which Mark Twain married than there was in Mark Twain. To find so much revolt against empty forms and conventions, so much laughing realism, and downright common sense, and democracy, and science, and reckless and humorous truth-telling, in these people who were, nevertheless, dedicated with moral courage to an ideal, may well have given Mark Twain the possession of his deepest and best self.

“You see the thing that gravels her,” he wrote of Livy in those early days, “is that I am so persistently glorified as a mere buffoon, as if that entirely covered my case—which she denies with venom.” And twenty years later, speaking of what a man learns “while he sleeps” he wrote this:

When I finished Carlyle's *French Revolution* in 1871, I was a Girondin; every time I have read it since, I have read it differently—being influenced and changed, little by little, by life and environment (and Taine and St. Simon); and now I lay the book down once more, and recognize that I am a Sansculotte!—And not a pale, characterless Sansculotte, but a Marat. Carlyle teaches no such gospel: so the change is in *me*—in my vision of the evidence.

Had Mark Twain set out to prove that the unconscious influence of his married life upon his social outlook had *not* been “bourgeois,” he could hardly have penned a better argument.

There remains, however, the question of Olivia's influence upon his literary style. The question is more subtle because it was in some sense the appointed destiny of Mark Twain, together with Walt Whitman although in so different a medium, to introduce in the name of America a new plebeian naturalistic roughness into what had been too aptly called “polite literature.” It was this quality of plebeian roughness, combined so unexpectedly with high intelligence, which made *The Innocents Abroad* a momentous book. The important function of “shocking the bourgeois” had heretofore been undertaken by young men and women over-developed on the aesthetic side. Mark Twain, like America at large, was undeveloped on that side. He was unrefined—belligerently so—and this, if not confused with being uncivilized, was a part of his unique value.

When I met Mark Twain in the Park Church, they were installing, with a flock of celebrated organists and much lofty music, a new organ. There was hardly anybody there but organists and Langdons and Mark Twain and the pastor's family. I was astonished at the princely grace of his greeting when my mother introduced me. I might have been the Lord Mayor instead of a scared child. People used to be astonished in a similar way to find that Walt Whitman was scrupulously clean. That is what I mean by confusing unrefined with uncivilized.

But I have another memory from that meeting. When it came our organist's turn to play, he asked the distinguished visitor what he would like to hear, and Mark Twain said: “Tannhauser.” I knew that he wanted the *Pilgrims Chorus*, or perhaps the *Overture*—or thought I knew,

because that was what I wanted. But Mr. Peake—Dalby Peake his name was, and he was very British—played the “Tannhauser March.” He played it badly, submerging the melody as organists, or rather organs, almost always do for ears not highly practiced, in an opaque flood of sound. I saw that Mark Twain was disappointed, although he said nothing. We happened the next day to be on the same train towards New York, and I summoned up my last ounce of courage and went over and asked him whether my surmise about the music had not been right.

“Oh, I guess that’s it,” he said. “Anyway that stuff’s all too high up for me.” His hand flew up above his head to illustrate, and came down low and flat. “*I live right down here!*”

It is the value in that attitude—or the question whether it has a value—which complicates the problem about Olivia’s influence upon Mark Twain. It was undoubtedly a “refining” influence. I myself, much as I admired and loved her family, was always a little frightened by their refinement. I was tongue-tied and troubled by the discovery that I had hands and feet whenever I entered the serene door of the stately dark-brown mansion where they lived. Clara Clemens had described the “confusion of greetings and exclamations of delight from old and young” when her family would arrive for a visit in that mansion. I find it difficult to imagine confusion there, and I am sure that within its precincts I never summoned up anything so disturbing to the atmosphere as an exclamation. “The hall and spacious living room,” Clara says, “were rather dark, which added to their interest and general personality ... and the wide mahogany staircases belonged in an eventful romance.” I of course was afraid of the dark, and a wide mahogany staircase could put me in my place about as quickly as anything short of a direct command. So I think it might be well to add my memory and Clara’s together and divide by two. Even then you will find the Langdons, and especially the women folk, distinguished so exactly by “refinement” that the contrast between them and the Mark Twain whom the wandering Charlie brought among them in 1867 must have been indeed abrupt and startling.

On the other hand, my extreme timor, and a resulting sensitivity to qualities as well as quantities of social elevation, enables me to testify that the Langdons occupied a somewhat special position in Elmira society, and their refinement was by no means of the “cheap and easy” kind. There were richer families there, and equally mahogany staircases, staircases which frightened me quite as badly; but most of them were a little raw and conscious of themselves by comparison. If Jervis Langdon

had been a landed aristocrat and the others had made their pile in coal and lumber, if Jervis Langdon had been born to an estate, and they had started in as country storekeepers, then the economic facts would have corresponded to what existed obviously to my perceptions. I can express now what I felt then by saying that Olivia's family were less like an "upper bourgeoisie" than a nobility in Elmira. Their elevation seemed deep and old and spiritual and infinitely removed from snobbishness. They were at once princely and democratic.

V

Thus I can agree that Olivia's influence upon Mark Twain was a "refining" one, without so totally rejecting it as those do who imagine it to have been the crass refinement of the typical rich merchant of something called "those up-State towns." I do not shudder as Van Wyck Brooks does when Mark Twain says: "I was a mighty rough, coarse, unpromising subject when Livy took charge of me..." Knowing it was no mid-Victorian genteel abstraction who took charge of him, I know the description of himself is accurate from other standpoints than that of mid-Victorian gentility. The present Jervis Langdon, Olivia's nephew who now lives at Quarry Farm, has composed for his Elmira friends a small brochure of family recollections, which contains a new account of his father's first meeting with Mark Twain in the good ship *Quaker City*, and also of Mark Twain's arrival in Elmira. It is the first word about Mark Twain from the side of his wife's family, and it gives an innocent or at least *unindoctrinated* picture of the early contact of these two men, and these two cultural climates, so alien and so magnetic to each other.

A game of cards was on and my father, Charles Jervis Langdon, a youth of eighteen, one of the audience, attempted to correct one of the players, a slender Westerner with curly, mahogany-colored hair, who showed the frontier-man's ability to care for himself with the remark: "Young man, there's a prayer-meeting forward in the dining saloon and they need you there..."

And again:

Mr. Clemens characteristically chose that train with the biggest sounding name (the Cannon Ball, I believe it was), and towards the middle of the day my father received this telegram: "Train stops every fifteen minutes and stays three quarters of an hour, figure out when it will arrive and meet me." Accompanied by an old friend, my father went down the road to meet the new friend, whose entertaining humor and irresistible magnetism he hoped would balance up with the family for all the uncouth manners and looks, and make a short visit endurable. They found him in the smoker, in a yellow duster and a very dirty, old straw hat. His wardrobe was compressed into such small compass that it didn't really appear he had brought any.

It certainly is not essential to the Mark Twain of plebeian realism, or humorous naturalism, or robust democratism, or whatever you want to call it, to go courting a young girl who "hasn't her peer in Christendom" in a yellow duster and a dirty old straw hat.

Mr. Langdon speaks, as he inevitably would, with both temperance and tranquility about "the more recent attempts by some writers to prove that the influence of Mark Twain's 'in-laws,' more particularly the influence of his wife, retarded his progress towards greatness."

They have provoked [he says] an interesting discussion. I naturally enough, probably, agree with the many who feel, as Mr. Clemens himself felt, that he would have fallen far short of his best work without the appreciative, yet exacting, editing and suggesting and restraining of his wife ... for, as I have said, he was, to begin with, a rough diamond.

As to Mark Twain's philosophy or attitude to life, I would go so far as to add the word "teaching" to those here used. The roots of his wisdom go back just as surely to Thomas K. Beecher's complete and sin-

gularly majestic revolt against the whole New England scheme of being in the mind of old Lyman Beecher, as they do to Western mining camps and Mississippi steamboats. His contact with that was his first contact, after the war which he so lightly dipped into and backed out of, with a great iconoclasm, a living and courageous moral and political ideal.

Upon the more ticklish question of refinement versus robust realism, it would be my guess that the Langdons and Mark Twain did each other both a world of good. I certainly do not share Olivia's desire to have the words *offal* and *breechclout* stricken from our language, and I dare say her delicacy and "restraint" deprived us of scenes and phrases which would have drawn Mark Twain closer to our modern hearts, and which belonged to his true greatness. But this whole matter has been vastly exaggerated and *darkened*, by people who take Mark Twain's "kidding" seriously, and I think it was the influence of an age far more than of a person. Mark Twain might, but for Olivia, have known that *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was a great book, and he might have guided his creative life somewhat differently, knowing that. But the idea that he might have been a Rabelaisian genius, is, in my opinion, pure fantasy, detached from historic good sense. There are, on the other hand, indubitable traces of that "yellow duster and dirty old straw hat" in some of Mark Twain's humorous writing, and we can largely thank Olivia's influence that there are not many more.

DeVoto has pointed out that her revisions of his vocabulary were only those that the folkways of the epoch would have made, and not the folkways only, but the publishers and such editors as Richard Watson Gilder and William Dean Howells. She was, in fact, less strict in her demand for *nicetude* than they, and so was her whole family. This you will realize, when you hear the full story, for some reason never yet told, of the famous phrase stricken from *Tom Sawyer*: "They combed me all to hell."

Van Wyck Brooks tells us how Mark Twain asked Howells for an opinion on it, and Howells answered: "I'd have out that swearing in an instant." And he tells us what was said afterward. But he forgets, or has failed to notice, that in asking for the opinion, Mark Twain had written:

Long ago when I read that to Mrs. Clemens, she made no comment; another time I created occasion to read that chapter to her aunt and her mother (both sensitive and loyal

subjects of the kingdom of heaven, so to speak)
and *they* let it pass.

While failing to present this serious statement, Brooks quotes a contradictory and quite obviously jocular account of what happened **after** Howells had ordered the “swearing” out:

Mrs. Clemens received the mail this morning and the next minute she lit into the study with danger in her eye and this demand on her tongue, “Where is the profanity Mr. Howells speaks of?” Then I had to miserably confess that I had left it out when reading the manuscript to her. Nothing but almost inspired lying got me out of this scrap with my scalp.

However much one may enjoy Mr. Brooks’ historical novel, it is difficult to forgive him his unreadiness to smile at Mark Twain’s humor, and particularly his taking for serious these accounts of Livy’s ferocious descents upon her husband. They were hilariously funny to Mark Twain’s friends, because her tenderness and quietness and perpetual considerate restraint, and sympathetic understanding, were as near as anything in this world can be, absolute.

The letters, still unpublished, that they wrote home to Elmira from the gift house in Buffalo soon after they were married, are full of this gay foolery, of his jests and hers, about her disposition to correct his wild statements—for it is that usually rather than his taste. A paragraph in one of these letters is interesting because it puts her in the position of the unrefined one:

Mr. Beecher came Saturday and preached morning and evening. The evening sermon, to a crowded house, was received with prodigious favor and he went away from here leaving a great fame behind him. From Elmira we learn that Dr. Heacock created a similar furor in the Opera House Sunday night. It does these people good to change off and shin around a

little. (I was going to put that “move around.”
But Livy said “shin around” was pleasanter.)

Above the last phrase is written—supposedly by Livy, although their handwritings were, strangely enough, so alike as to be almost indistinguishable: “It is a fabrication.”

Perhaps the main thing I have to do is to remind the critics and biographers, who seem never to have thought of it, that Olivia Langdon, who loved Mark Twain, loved humor. All her family and all that extraordinary constellation of iconoclasts surrounding Mr. Beecher—had I but space to tell about them all—loved humor and had a jovial and subtle sense of it. Therefore, do not imagine, when you read about Olivia’s taking Mark Twain “in charge,” and “censoring” and “editing,” and “giving it” to him, and about the famous process of social correction which the children called “dusting papa off”—do not imagine that the humorous perception of this, the subtle and understanding laughter, the sense of proportion that is inherent in such laughter, were not shared by all.

And do not forget either that just as there was play in his pretense that she was a ferocious boss, there was play too in the pretense that he was so malleable a moral substance in her hands. I find another new and delightful thing in this brochure of Jervis Langdon’s that is not irrelevant here. It is a letter that Mark Twain wrote to his nephew’s bride, on the occasion of their marriage:

Dear Lee:—Now that you are about to enter upon a great and solemn responsibility, and one which is new to you, perhaps a word from one who is experienced may be of service to you.

To begin, then: the first requisite to happiness in the married state is obedience. Where obedience is wanting, failure is certain; where obedience is wanting, trouble is sure to follow; where obedience is wanting, it were better, a hundred times better, that the marriage had never been.

The best way, the wisest way, the only safe and right way, is to exact it at the very start—then it will soon come easy to him. But if you

fool around—but don't do that, don't do it. Your Aunt Livy did that, for a long time, hoping against hope, but at the end of the week she realized her mistake, and ever since then, happiness has reigned...

That is the oldest kind of humor in the world, and yet it was never more delightfully new. Is it not a little slow-witted of us to come along, after we ourselves are safe from the shafts of his laughter, and take such charming jests with complete seriousness? It seems to me that, having regard to the force and masterhood of character that are required to make an immortal author out of a Mississippi River gamin, we might surmise from his very light-heartedness about it that perhaps Mark Twain was, in the shoals of feminine influence as in some other perilous places—and of course you and I are—a rather self-confident pilot. He certainly knew a great deal more about the nature of Olivia's influence upon him than his critics do—he knew at least that she was not an abstract idea—and he could hardly have exercised less discrimination in appraising its different parts and elements. For my part, having grown up in the very same environment and with her family among my dear friends, I think that the Elmira influence was a vitally liberating one to Mark Twain, and that he actively, and with judgment as well as joy, absorbed it.

Chapter Eight

Woodlawn Cemetery

Of all the sites associated with Mark Twain in Elmira, none attracts more interest than his grave in Woodlawn Cemetery. More than 46,000 persons, including a governor of New York, have been buried in this park-like cemetery since 1858, but by far the greatest number of visitors come to see the grave of Mark Twain. It was a great personal tragedy to Mark Twain, who adored his family, that he should outlive most of those who were dear to him: his only son, his beloved Livy and two of his lovely, talented daughters. Only one daughter survived him, and she, and a granddaughter he never saw, complete the roster of all the direct descendants of Mark Twain buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Jervis Langdon purchased the family plot in 1866 and was the first to be buried there four years later. The next burial was that of Mark Twain's infant son, Langdon Clemens, who died in Hartford of diphtheria in 1872. At that time the decision must have been made to use the plot for members of the Clemens family as well as the Langdons.

Susy Clemens was the next of Mark Twain's children to be buried in Woodlawn Cemetery. She had chosen to stay behind when Mark, Livy and Clara went on the round-the-world lecture tour in 1895-96, and had been left with Jean and Katy Leary at Quarry Farm. Jean attended the Park Place School in Elmira while Susy broke the quiet of life at Quarry Farm with visits to New York City and to Hartford. The two girls and Katy were ready to leave for England to join the rest of the family at the end of the tour in August, 1896, when Susy became ill in Hartford. The sickness was diagnosed as spinal meningitis. The Hartford house was reopened and Katy Leary nursed the sick girl until she died on August 18, 1896. She was twenty-four years old. Death came while Livy and Clara were still on the ocean on their way back to care for her and with Mark Twain at a cottage in England waiting for them all to join him.

Clara wrote, "The funeral services took place in Elmira, where we were shown tender sympathy and care. Susy was laid to rest in the cemetery we used to visit as children, because of its beautiful trees and tranquility." Katy Leary observed, "That was the first death in the family since the first little baby—the first break that had ever come, and they never got over the loss. I don't think Mrs. Clemens ever stopped grieving for Susy." Neither did Mark Twain.

His next great loss, while less unexpected, was no less traumatic. Mark Twain's Livy died in Florence, Italy, after a long period as an invalid, on June 5, 1904. Jervis Langdon recorded in his diary on Monday, June 6, "News reached us through Associated Press dispatch to Gazette of Aunt Livy's death yesterday. Cable from Uncle Sam a little later." Two days later, he noted, "Father received 2nd telegram from Uncle Sam: 'The ruined household undivided sail in Prince Oscar twenty eighth homeward bound.'" Jervis Langdon was in New York to meet the boat on July 12. "Down the bay with Edward [Loomis] on 'Lackawanna.' Contradicting orders. On board—smallpox scare. Uncle Sam, Clara & Jean very dear, but—pitiful, pitiful."

The funeral in Elmira was on July 14. According to Jervis Langdon's diary it was a beautiful day. "Funeral services conducted by Mr. Eastman and Mr. Twichell. Many old friends there. Clara's illness at the grave." Katy Leary recalled the day in more detail.

We went right up to Elmira as soon as we landed. The funeral was to be there, from the old Langdon house. There was an immense crowd there that day, 'cause everybody loved Mrs. Clemens. You couldn't see all around the yard, it was so crowded with people, and the services was in the great parlor there, where her body laid, and where she was married more than thirty years ago. Her coffin was right there in the very same place, where she had stood all them years before, as a happy young bride. Mr. Twichell, who had married her then, he preached the funeral sermon, and Mr. Eastman said the prayers; and then they played "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

Mr. Clemens went to the cemetery, Woodlawn, and when he seen her coffin lowered down, then he made a great vow. He said standing there, that he'd never see another being that he loved lowered in the grave again.

When it was all over, Miss Clara gave a great cry and threw up her hands and her father caught her in his arms and held her. Her cry, it went through everybody. It hit everybody's heart. He didn't say a word. He just held her until the carriage came along and he put her in it, with Jean. Mr. Clemens was just

*like a dead person. It was over and our lives was just
broken in two. But by and by they had to try to begin
life again.*

Questions are sometimes raised about the apparent contradiction of accounts such as that of Katy Leary mentioning the burial of a body, and the evidence of the tombstone of Olivia Clemens on which is carved, “In this grave repose the ashes...” A newspaper story at the time of Jean’s death in 1909 confirms the inscription on the stone. The article mentioned the death of Mrs. Clemens in Florence, Italy, “where her body was cremated and the remains brought back to this city.” The trip took nine days and the grieving family evidently had no alternative. [Evidence that Olivia Langdon Clemens was not cremated follows: In a document to Homer M. Byington, vice Consul of the Consular Service, U.S.A. in Naples, Italy, Isabel V. Lyon noted the following secretarial information: “Mrs. Olivia Langdon Clemens late wife of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, born in Elmira, N.Y. Nov. 27, 184[5], died in the Villa di Quarto, Florence, Italy, June 5, 1904 after 22 months of nervous prostration—died finally of heart failure suddenly. The remains were embalmed by Dr. Kirch, naturalized American, now of Florence, and are contained in a leaden case hermetically sealed—also in an oaken coffin. Therefore the remains can be landed in the United States without danger to the public health.” Signed, Samuel Langhorne Clemens. Subscribed and sworn to before me this twenty-eighth day of June. A.D. 1904. Homer M. Byington United States vice Consul Naples, Italy. (in charge). (CU-MARK, UCCL 13091) The New York Times, Jun 7, 1904, reported: “Mrs. Clemens died painlessly. The body has been embalmed, and will be sent to the United States.” The New York Times, Jun 8, 1904, reported: “A funeral service of the simplest character took place over the body of Mrs. Samuel L. Clemens in the Villa Quarto today after a vexatious visit from sanitary officers and in compliance with annoying regulations. Only members of the family were present. The coffin was taken to a temporary vault, from which it will be sent to Genoa and placed aboard a German steamer for New York on June 25. Mr Clemens (Mark Twain) will go to the United States with the body.” These accounts suggest that the use of the words “the ashes” is symbolic, not literal.]

Nearly two years after her death, Mark Twain described what Olivia Langdon Clemens had meant to him.

*To-morrow will be the thirty-sixth anniversary of
our marriage. My wife passed from this life one year*

and eight months ago, in Florence, Italy, after an unbroken illness of twenty-two months' duration.

I saw her first in the form of an ivory miniature in her brother Charley's stateroom in the steamer Quaker City in the Bay of Smyrna, in the summer of 1867, when she was in her twenty-second year. I saw her in the flesh for the first time in New York in the following December. She was slender and beautiful and girlish—and she was both girl and woman. She remained both girl and woman to the last day of her life. Under a grave and gentle exterior burned inextinguishable fires of sympathy, energy, devotion, enthusiasm, and absolutely limitless affection. She was always frail in body, and she lived upon her spirit, whose hopefulnes and courage were indestructible. Perfect truth, perfect honesty, perfect candor, were qualities of her character which were born with her. Her judgments of people and things were sure and accurate. Her intuitions almost never deceived her. In her judgments of the characters and acts of both friends and strangers there was always room for charity, and this charity never failed. I have compared and contrasted her with hundreds of persons, and my conviction remains that hers was the most perfect character I have ever met. And I may add that she was the most winningly dignified person I have ever known. Her character and disposition were of the sort that not only invite worship, but command it. No servant ever left her service who deserved to remain in it. And as she could choose with a glance of her eye, the servants she selected did in almost all cases deserve to remain, and they did remain. She was always cheerful; and she was always able to communicate her cheerfulness to others. During the nine years that we spent in poverty and debt she was always able to reason me out of my despairs and find a bright side to the clouds and make me see it. In all that time I never knew her to utter a word of regret concerning our altered circumstances, nor did I ever know her

children to do the like. For she had taught them, and they drew their fortitude from her. The love which she bestowed upon those whom she loved took the form of worship, and in that form it was returned—returned by relatives, friends, and the servants of her household. It was a strange combination which wrought into one individual, so to speak, by marriage—her disposition and character and mind. She poured out her prodigal affections in kisses and caresses, and in a vocabulary of endearments whose profusion was always an astonishment to me. I was born reserved as to endearments of speech, and caresses, and hers broke upon me as the summer waves break upon Gibraltar. I was reared in that atmosphere of reserve. As I have already said, I never knew a member of my father's family to kiss another member of it except once, and that at a deathbed. And our village was not a kissing community. The kissing and caressing ended with courtship—along with the deadly piano-playing of that day.

She had the heart-free laugh of a girl. It came seldom, but when it broke upon the ear it was as inspiring as music. I heard it for the last time when she had been occupying her sick bed for more than a year, and I made a written note of it at the time—a note not to be repeated.

Death struck Mark Twain still another blow when his twenty-nine-year-old daughter, Jean, his closest companion in his last years, died on the day before Christmas in 1909 at Stormfield, their home in Redding, Connecticut. Jean had never been in good health and her death was the result of an epileptic seizure while in her morning bath. The distraught father cabled Clara and Ossip Gibrilowitsch in Europe not to come home. Jervis Langdon came from Elmira and made the arrangements to take her body back for burial. Katy Leary dressed her in the white silk dress she had worn at Clara's wedding and accompanied her back to Elmira. Mark Twain poured out his feelings on paper, writing "The Death of Jean," the last thing he wrote. "I saw her mother buried," he wrote, "I said I would never endure that horror again; that I would never again look into the grave of any one dear to me. I have kept that. They will take Jean from this

house to-morrow, and bear her to Elmira, New York, where lie those of us that have been released, but I shall not follow.”

Although the sad old man did not make the trip to Elmira in person, his imagination carried him there and he saw the funeral with the clear vision of the mind’s eye. “The scene is the library in the Langdon homestead. Jean’s coffin stands where her mother and I stood, forty years ago, and were married; and where Susy’s coffin stood thirteen years ago, and where her mother’s stood five and a half years ago; and where mine will stand after a little time.”

The “little time” was only four months. Sick, lonely and sorrowful, Mark Twain left the house at Redding for Bermuda, but after a few months he became worse and came home to die. Clara and Ossip Gabrilowitsch hurried back from Europe and Jervis Langdon came from Elmira. They were there when he slipped away peacefully at 6:32 in the evening of April 21, 1910.

Excerpts from the Unpublished Diary of Jervis Langdon (1875-1952)

Several accounts of the death of Samuel Langhorne Clemens have been published by persons who were there, but the description of his death and funeral by his nephew, Jervis Langdon, from his unpublished diary is given here for the first time by permission of Jervis Langdon, Jr. .

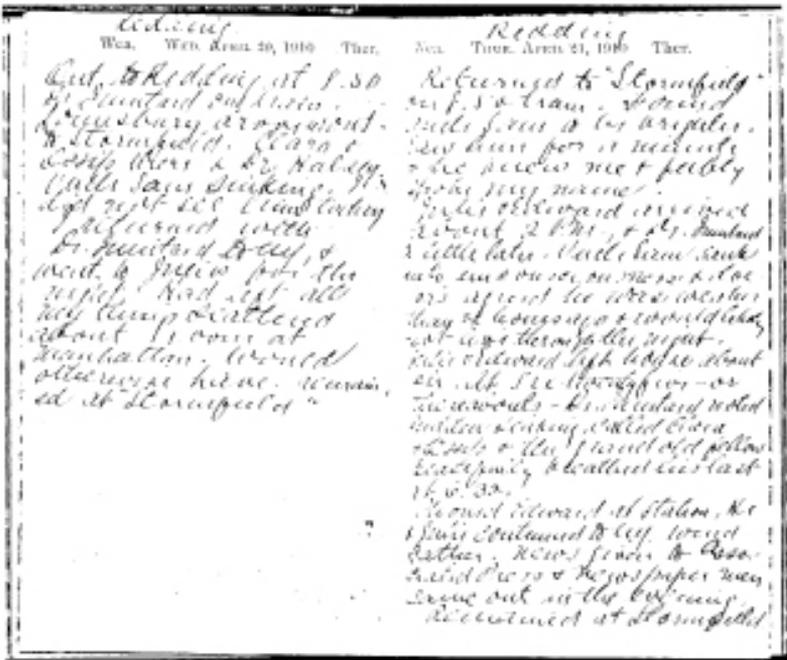
Wed. April 20, 1910. Redding. Out to Redding at 8.50. Dr. Quintard on train. Lounsbury drove us out to Stormfield. Clara and Ossip there & Dr. Halsey. Uncle Sam sinking. I did not see him today. I returned with Dr. Quintard today, & went to Julie’s for the night. Had left all my things scattered about room at Manhattan. Would otherwise have remained at “Stormfield”.

Thur. April 21, 1910. Redding. Returned to “Stormfield” on 8.50 train. Found Uncle Sam to be brighter. Saw him for a minute & he knew me & feebly spoke my name. Julie & Edward arrived about 2 P.M., & Dr. Quintard a little later. Uncle Sam sank into unconsciousness & doctors agreed he was weaker than 24 hours ago & would likely not live through the night. Julie & Edward left house about six. At six-twenty five—or thereabouts—Dr. Quintard noted sudden sinking, called Clara & Ossip & the grand old fellow peacefully breathed his last at 6.32. Phoned

Edward at station. He & Julie continued to N.Y. Wired Father. News given to Associated Press & newspaper men came out in the evening. Remained at Stormfield.

Fri. April 22, 1910. Redding. Funeral arrangements were practically completed last night. Edward in N.Y. consulted with Maj. Leigh & Mr. Duneka of Harpers. Clara in the end prefers a stop-off in N.Y. & service there. Open to the public except for some special cards sent out. Spent the day largely with Clara and Ossip. Clara is wonderfully calm and dear. Dr. Quintard spent last night here. Uncle Sam placed in mahogany coffin, which Edward picked out, in the evening & he lay all night in state in the beautiful library.

Sat. April 23, 1910. Redding & N.Y. Beautiful weather continued. Up early. We left a little after nine the country hearse first, then Lounsbury driving Paine, Claude & I & later Clara, Ossip & Katy in the old coupe. Newspaper men & cameras. Reached N.Y. at 12. Met by Edward, Maj.



Page from Jervis Langdon's Diary. Reproduced for the first time through the courtesy of his son, Jervis Langdon.

Leigh & Mr. Duneka. Clara & Ossip went with Edward to the apartment. The rest of us to the Brick Church where he was quietly laid before the pulpit. Simple service by Dr. Van Dyck & Dr. Twichell, & then three or four thousand passing in review. Young *Herald* reporter & I saw the coffin into Donnelly's hands at Hoboken Station. To Julies to dinner. All went to the car in good season & to bed by midnight.

Sun. April 24, 1910. Raining when we arrived at Elmira. Father there to meet us. Lee & the children well. Funeral services at 3.30. Mr. Eastman very good—his prayer wonderful. He was very brief. Father met Mr. Paine, Mr. Duneka and Maj. Leigh. To the cemetery in heavy downpour which was continuously a part of the day. We got a carriage & took the children down to Mothers. Clara & Ossip seemed to like them. All except I of the party returned on No. 8.

Mon. April 25, 1910. Rain mostly over. River very high. Washouts on the railroads...

Samuel L. Clemens To-day Lies Beside His Wife and Children in Woodlawn

A fuller description of the simple funeral service was given in the Elmira Advertiser, April 25, 1910. For many Elmirans it was a moment of history that they remembered for the rest of their lives. Years later an old man recalled that as a boy he had climbed over the cemetery fence and taken some roses from the grave. Surely the creator of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn would have been pleased.

Under a tent on the grassy slope of the Langdon plot in Woodlawn Cemetery, with rain beating fiercely against the canvas cover, a little group of mourners silently watched yesterday as the body of Samuel L. Clemens was lowered into an evergreen-lined grave beside those of his wife and children. Rev. Samuel E. Eastman, pastor of Park Church and a close friend of the dead humorist, conducted a brief but simple service and Mark Twain's first pilgrimage was at an end. To-night he lies sleeping under a grave piled high with flowers, the tributes of loving friends from far and near.

A former governess of the Clemens family and two of her friends and half a dozen newspaper men watched the little procession as the hearse bearing its precious burden and the accompanying carriages wound their way slowly through the cemetery in a pouring rain to the tent that had been erected to give shelter from the storm. Aside from these and the sexton there was no one to intrude on the privacy of the ceremony.

The funeral services at the residence of General Charles J. Langdon, on Main Street, were extremely simple and in keeping with the expressed wish of the deceased. There was no music, no honorary pall bearers—just a brief address by Rev. Mr. Eastman. The body of the distinguished man of letters lay in state in the parlor where forty years ago he was married to General Langdon's sister. Some of those who attended the wedding were there yesterday to look for the last time upon the face of their friend. But neither Thomas K. Beecher nor Rev. Joseph Twichell, who performed the wedding ceremony, were in attendance. A bronze statue of Mr. Beecher, who died several years ago, stands in the center of a park across the street from the Langdon home. Mr. Twichell sent word of his inability to come on account of the illness of his wife, who later died in Hartford, Conn.

The services at the house were public but the attendance was not large. Besides the funeral party which accompanied the body from Redding the little gathering included some of the relatives and old friends of the Clemenses who reside here.

The body of the great humorist lay in the plain mahogany casket in the front parlor of the Langdon home. To those who came to pay their last respects to this man who had brightened their lives because he lived, Mark Twain appeared to be but sleeping. Just before he died the newspaper dispatches told of how he had fallen into the first restful slumber he had experienced in a long time and as he lay in his casket one could hardly help but remark of the look of contentment on the man's face. He had longed for death and it came to him as a peaceful sleep. Death had wrought no changes in his features. The stained moustache told of the one joy of his declining years, outside of his only living daughter, his cigar.

Elmirans who had known Mr. Clemens personally, despite their age braved the storm to look once more upon the features of the grand old man. A comparatively few sat about and gazed at one another conscious of the fact that in the casket nearby rested a man who had won

worldwide renown, yet whose funeral was to be of the simplest kind. It appears as if Elmirans had just come to realize what it was to have Mark Twain in their midst, even though the pen had been laid away and the kindly features had set never to relax. No more would he work for the entertainment of mankind. His work was done as far as he was concerned, but his memory and his works will long continue to be a monument, such as few men have ever enjoyed.

A Friend's Tribute

And then the reveries of these few was interrupted as the Rev. Samuel E. Eastman arose promptly at 3:30 o'clock and began the simple services. After reading several selected passages from scripture, he spoke briefly as follows: "Friends," he said, "we are not here at this time to speak of the great man whose going hence the whole world mourns, nor to claim for him that place in the halls of fame which time can give him. We are not here to try to estimate his worth to the world—the service he has rendered to civilization and the moral progress of mankind nor yet to eulogize him for the integrity, justice and magnanimity of his character. There will be time enough for all this in the days to come and many a voice more competent than mine to set forth the lessons of his life. We are here to 'weep with those that weep,' to give thanks with those whose own he was in the sacred bonds of human kinship and family affection for all that he means to them, for the unfailing trust and help he gave them and gratefully took from them in turn: for the daily gospel of his life in his home and among his kindred: for all the memories of loyalty, mercy and loving kindness which cluster about his name as father, husband, brother, uncle, friend, in their hearts."

Rev. Eastman's Prayer

Mr. Eastman then offered the following prayer which brought the services at the house to a close: "The heart knoweth its own bitterness and no stranger intermeddleth with its joy. We thank for each sorrowing soul's peculiar joy and its bitterness.

"May the joy deepen and the bitterness be dissolved in its depths, for sorrow indeed endureth for the night, but joy returneth with the morning.

"For the dear child who remains sole heir of a happy household's gracious memories we ask daily strength and wisdom and grace which shall make her rich inheritance a blessing to every soul she meets; for all

those to whom the world is darkened by the going out of this light of a loving life, we pray thy comfort—the comfort of enobled thoughts, widening charity and enlarging hope. We lay to our hearts, the wise man’s great words, ‘There can no evil befall a good man either in life or after death,’ and the divine words of Jesus, ‘Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid, I go away and come back to you.’

“We thank thee for the light that shineth in darkness, for the hope that riseth out of every good and beautiful life lived amid the shadows of mortality; even the hope of a higher service, a sweeter joy, a more abundant life beyond the sphere of time and space.

“We thank thee for all the works and words of cheer and good will our friend and sometimes neighbor has left us in the hearts of those who knew and loved him; that in his life he declared himself the friend of every living thing, that our hill side bears witness to the greatness of his heart who sought to bless even the passing beasts of burden with the joys that enriched his life.

“May we all take counsel in this hour with our better selves and learn that the only good which we can give away and yet possess forever, are honesty and justice, hope and love.

“So shall the house of mourning be better to us than the house of feasting and the blessing of them that mourn be ours.

“May the blessing of God that has followed us all the days of our lives abide with us all, though we be separated in worlds, but not in life. Amen.”

Many a Tear-dimmed Eye

During his reading the reverend gentleman who had been a close friend of the deceased was nearly overcome with emotion and several times out of the fullness of his heart [he] seemed to falter as he spoke. The little group present seemed to be imbued with the same spirit and there was a tear in many an eye. When the services were over those present slowly filed out of the house, and not until they had reached the street did they regain their composure.

Then began the slow procession to the cemetery where Mr. Clemens was to be laid beside the body of his beloved wife whose sudden death in Florence, Italy, had proven such a blow to his declining years. Here in this same plot lay the bodies of his three children, Langhorne, jr. [sic.] Olivia Susan and Jean, the loss of whom together with his wife, had made Samuel L. Clemens weary of life. It was only last Christmas

that Jean had died and at that time the father was in such feeble health at [sic.] he could not come here to the burial. He was coming to rejoin her now.

As the burial was to be private, no one outside of the immediate family [and] a few faithful servants, except four newspapermen were on hand when the funeral cortege reached its destination on the top of a little hill where a tent had been put up as a shelter against the storm. The few outsiders stood at a distance while the casket was lowered in the midst of the sorrowing relatives.

Mrs. Ossip Gabrilowitsch, who was Clara Clemens, the only surviving daughter of the late author, bore up well under the trying ordeal and on leaving was escorted to her carriage by her husband, and cousin, Jervis Langdon, of this city. After the carriages had left the scene Undertaker Smith permitted the few newspapermen to view the last resting place of the man who began his career in a newspaper office. The four stood with uncovered heads, the last to look upon all that was mortal of this great man.

And then they hurried away and at last Samuel Clemens and his lamented wife lay side by side in the solitude of Elmira's picturesque City of the Dead while a dismal rain continued to fall, a fitting setting for a career that ended with a sorrowful heart bowed down by grief for loved ones who had departed from this life. Mark Twain's had been a stormy career and the great man's wish during his last days had been fulfilled. It seemed that Providence had taken note of the passing of this man.

His Last Resting Place

In years to come people will come from far and near to view this last resting place of Mark Twain as they have done for many years to Stratford-on-Avon where is buried William Shakespeare. Pilgrimages will be made to this spot in beautiful Woodlawn cemetery and thus has Mark Twain distinguished this Queen city where much of his labor was performed and where he met the girl whom he loved and where he finally came to lie in his last sleep. Elmira is to be envied in being the last resting place of this international figure. May he rest in peace.

Arrival of the Remains

The body arrived in this city from New York yesterday morning over the Lackawanna at 9:25 o'clock on the private car "Lake Forest." Accompanying it were the following: Mr. and Mrs. Ossip Gabrilowitsch, Mr.

Clemens' only surviving daughter and her husband; Edward E. Loomis, vice president of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad; and Mrs. Loomis, a niece; Albert Bigelow Paine; and Jarvis [sic.] Langdon, a nephew; Katie Leary, the housekeeper, who thirty years ago entered the services of the Clemenses in this city; and Claude, the butler. F. A. Duneka and Major F. P. Leigh, of Harper Brothers, came on to Elmira to attend the funeral.

General Langdon was at the station to meet the party and the body was at once taken to the Langdon home.

It was hoped that the Rev. Joseph Twichell, of Hartford, Conn., a life-long personal friend of the later Mr. Clemens, could come to this city and deliver the funeral oration. The Rev. Joseph Twichell had intended to come but here another pathetic incident entered into this strange story. The wife of Mr. Twichell had been taken ill in Hartford and he had been hastily summoned from the funeral services over the remains of his friend in New York City, back to the bedside of his wife; and when morning came, the Angel of Death had entered his own household and snatched away a loving helpmate. The mourners around the Clemens' bier in this city were further grieved by the telegram announcing this death, yesterday morning. Mrs. Ossip Gabrilowitsch immediately telegraphed to Hartford that she would hasten to that city together with her husband, as soon as the last rites had been held over the body of her dead father.

Elmira can not but help feeling a touch of pity for the daughter, the last of a noble family. Heartfelt sympathy goes out to her from even the remotest corner of the globe and the world mourns with her in this hour of sorrow. She has lost a father, and the world has lost a ray of sunshine that can never be replaced. Mark Twain sleeps in Woodlawn.

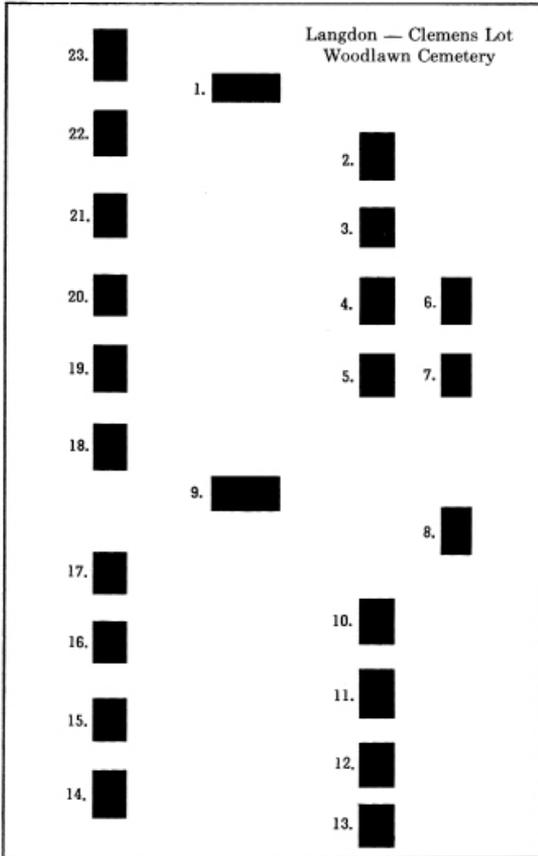
Langdon-Clemens Plot In Woodlawn

by Eva Taylor

Visitors to Woodlawn Cemetery sometimes find the Clemens-Gabrilowitsch monument and the grave markers confusing. The identity of the various family members buried there was clarified in an article by Elmira historian, Eva Taylor,

entitled "Langdon-Clemens Plot in Woodlawn Cemetery," published in the Chemung Historical Journal, Vol. 18, No. 4 (June, 1973), pp. 2273-2281.

This paper was prepared with the Steele Memorial Library, the Chemung County Historical Center and the office of Woodlawn Cemetery particularly in mind. It is hoped that it will be helpful to them in answering questions asked by the many tourists who come to Elmira to learn all they can about Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens) and his relation to Elmira. Such tourists sometimes find the Langdon-Clemens plot in Woodlawn confusing. The serious minded among them then come to one of the agencies mentioned above to learn who-was-who among the Clemens and Langdon families buried there, and what were their relations to each other.



Both the Library and the Historical Center often receive letters asking about Mark Twain and the Langdons. Mrs. Martha Kelsey Squires says that during her seven years as county historian there was hardly a day when she did not receive one such letter and some days more than one. These letters came from all over the country from college professors as well as general readers. Some were from people who had long been interested in Twain; others from those who had just discovered him.

There is less knowledge and more misunderstanding about Mark Twain and Elmira than one might expect. Some think that Mark Twain built the Langdon mansion that once stood at the northwest corner of North Main and Church Streets; others that Mark Twain owned Quarry Farm. Many Elmiraans have no idea of the importance of the Langdons in our history, even apart from their relation to Mark Twain. Elmiraans do not always find it easy to answer the questions of visiting friends and relatives. It is hoped that the following notes used with the numbered drawing of the cemetery plot will be helpful.

1. Mark Twain/Ossip Gabrilowitsch Monument.

One can see the Mark Twain-Gabrilowitsch Monument as one approaches the plot. Ossip Gabrilowitsch, distinguished pianist and orchestra director, was the husband of Clara Clemens, Mark Twain's daughter. She erected the monument as a memorial to her father and her husband. It was designed and its whole creation supervised by Ernfred Anderson, Elmira artist. When Mrs. Gabrilowitsch began to think about a memorial to her husband who had asked to be buried at the feet of Mark Twain, she consulted her cousin Jervis Langdon II of Elmira, and Mr. Langdon advised her to get in touch with Mr. Anderson. The Langdons had been much impressed by Mr. Anderson's work, especially a bust of Mark Twain that he had modeled. They thought it the best likeness of the great writer they had ever seen.

Mr. Anderson visited Mrs. Gabrilowitsch and suggested that she erect a monument that would honor both her husband and father. She agreed to this, and Mr. Anderson later visited her with detailed sketches of what he would like to do. She approved these. Mr. Anderson remembers her as "a grand lady" with a head and face remarkably like her father's. He says she was pleased when he told her so.

The shaft of the monument is of Westerly granite, known in the trade as perhaps the finest stone of its kind in the world. The name is from Westerly, Rhode Island where the quarry is. The granite is all be-

low sea level. Mr. Anderson picked out the spot in a great wall of granite where he thought a flawless piece of the size he wanted could be cut. This granite was shipped to Quincy, Mass. where there has been a stone cutting industry since 1750. Here the shaft was cut and finished according to Mr. Anderson's design. Most of the monument is finished in a style which stone cutters call hammered, but in the center of the front of the shaft is a slender panel highly polished and reaching about half way up the monument. Above the polished panel are bas-relief, profile portraits in bronze of Twain and Gabrilowitsch. They are in perpendicular sequence with identification just below. Mrs. Gabrilowitsch chose the name Mark Twain rather than Clemens to be on the monument.

The shaft is exactly twelve feet or two "fathoms" high. Leads men on Mississippi River boats called out "Mark Twain" when the water was two fathoms deep. It was a reassuring message to the pilot and Clemens chose it for his pen name. The good proportions of the shaft and its graceful lines give it an air of grace that belies its weight—eight tons.

On the base of the monument is the following inscription:

Death is the starlit strip between the companionship of yesterday and the reunion of tomorrow. To the loving memory of my father and my husband.

CCG

1937

It was a particular pleasure to Mr. Anderson to have this commission from Mrs. Gabrilowitsch. As a boy in Sweden he had read about Tom and Huck in his native tongue. At the same time he designed the monument he planned a headstone for the grave of Gabrilowitsch. This he did in the style of Mark Twain's headstone which was already in place.

Among the many who have made pilgrimages to the burial place of Mark Twain were the child actors Thomas Kelly and Ann Gillis who were Tom Sawyer and Becky Thatcher in the first movie version of "Tom Sawyer." Musicians playing in the symphony orchestras that come to Elmira sometimes find time to pay similar homage to Gabrilowitsch, one of their own.

As one stands looking at the front of the Clemens-Gabrilowitsch monument and turns right he will see the headstones as they are numbered on our chart. (The monument itself is number 1.)

2. Jean Lampton Clemens 1880-1909.

Mark Twain's youngest daughter. The name Lampton was the family name of Twain's mother. Inscriptions on the headstone:

In memory of Jean Lampton Clemens
A most dear daughter.
Her desolate father sets this stone.
"After life's fitful fever she sleeps well."

Mark Twain wrote a moving story called, "The Death of Jean" which is now available in a book of his essays called, "*What is Man?*"

3. Olivia Susan Clemens 1872-1896.

First of Mark Twain's three daughters, known to her family as Susy. Inscription on her headstone:

"Warm summer sun
Shine kindly here,
Warm southern wind
Blow gently here,
Green sod above
Lie light, lie light-
Good night, dear heart,
Good night, good night."

Robert Richardson

These lines were first attributed to Clemens himself. When he learned of this he ordered the poet's name cut beneath them. In the original the word southern read northern since in the poet's native Australia the warm wind is from the north.

Susy had considerable literary talent. *Susy and Mark Twain* by Edith Colgate Salsbury is a charming, skillful book made up partly of material written by Susy.

4. Olivia Langdon 1845-1904.

Daughter of the first Jervis Langdon to live in Elmira. Wife of Mark Twain. Inscriptions on her headstone:

In this grave repose the ashes of Olivia Langdon
the beloved and lamented wife of
Samuel L. Clemens
who reverently raises this stone to her memory.
Gott sei der gnadig, O meine Wonne!

(English translation—God be merciful unto you, O my joy.)

Mrs. Clemens died in Florence, Italy.

5. Samuel Langhorne Clemens 1835-1910.

Won world-wide fame as Mark Twain. Married Olivia Langdon at her home in Elmira February 2, 1870. He and his family spent many happy summers at Quarry Farm, the East Hill home of Mrs. Theodore Crane, sister of Mrs. Clemens. Much of Twain's best writing was done there. There he worked on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *Life on the Mississippi*. In many letters he spoke of Elmira as being his best place to work as he had no distractions here. His last working summer here was 1903. He came briefly in 1904 to attend a funeral service for his wife held in the parlor of the Langdon mansion at the corner of Main and Church Streets. He came again in 1907 to make a speech at the dedication of the Thomas K. Beecher Organ in Park Church. Mr. Beecher was pastor of Park Church during all of Twain's Elmira period and they were great friends.

6. Clara Clemens 1874-1962.

Mark Twain's second daughter and wife of Ossip Gabrilowitsch. After the death of Gabrilowitsch she married Jacques Samossoud. She was the only one of Mark Twain's four children to survive him. She was devoted to her parents and sisters, always on call when there was illness or other family crises. She represented her father in planning and building his last home—Stormfield—a large, beautiful country place near Redding, Connecticut. In a general way she knew what her father wanted but he saw neither plans nor house until he moved in and had his first dinner there. He loved it and until the death of his daughter Jean who shared Stormfield with him, he was happy there. Clara later wrote a biography of her father called *My Father, Mark Twain*.

7. Ossip Gabrilowitsch 1878-1936.

Distinguished pianist and orchestra conductor. First husband of Mark Twain's daughter Clara. The young people met when they were both studying music in Germany. Gabrilowitsch asked to be buried at the feet of Mark Twain.

Inscription on headstone—Reflected in his art and in his life the noble beauty of his lofty ideals.

8. Nina Gabrilowitsch 1910-1966.

Daughter of Mark Twain's daughter Clara and his last descendant.

9. The Langdon family monument.

On the front (facing south) is the family name. On each side of the monument is a religious symbol. On the south, above the name, is the monogram meaning The Alpha and the Omega; on the east, three linked circles, the symbol of the Trinity; on the north, the monogram meaning In His Sign; on the west, a formee cross.

10. Theodore W. Crane 1831-1889.

Husband of Susan Langdon Crane, older sister of Olivia Langdon Clemens. Master of Quarry Farm. In the long summer vacations which the Clemenses spent at Quarry Farm, Mr. Crane and Mark Twain read books together and had long discussions on a great variety of subjects. Doubtless the deep friendship of these two men added to the happiness of the Clemens family in Elmira.

11. Susan Langdon Crane 1836-1924.

Mrs. Crane built at Quarry Farm on a hilltop overlooking Elmira a study for her brother-in-law Mark Twain. It was in the shape of a Mississippi River boat pilot house and Twain loved it. ["He found summer-time always his best period for literary effort, and on a hillside just by the old quarry, Mrs. Crane had built for him that spring a study – a little room of windows, somewhat suggestive of a pilot-house – overlooking the long sweep of grass and the dream-like city below." (Paine, Albert Bigelow. *Mark Twain: A Biography*. I, 507-08).] In a letter to a friend he said, "It's the loveliest little study you ever saw." It is now on the campus of Elmira College.

12. Ida Langdon 1880-1964.

Daughter of Charles Langdon and niece of Olivia Langdon Clemens. Earned a Ph.D. at Cornell and taught English Literature at Elmira College 1920-1942. In the December 1960 issue of the *Chemung Historical Journal* is a charming and altogether excellent article called "My Uncle Mark Twain" by Miss Langdon.

13. Esther Hudson Burr 1847-1935.

A long time member of the Charles Langdon household. Elmirans who remember her say that she was a great favorite with the Langdon children.

14. Eunice Ford 1782-1873.

Mother of the first Jervis Langdon to live in Elmira, and grandmother of Olivia Langdon Clemens. The Ford name is from a later marriage. Ausburn Townner said that she was a woman of "quaint sayings, ways and manners, partaking of the character of former and far away days and generations."

15. Jervis Langdon 1809-1870.

The first Langdon to live in Elmira. He came from an old, distinguished New England family. Among the early New England Langdons had been a delegate to the Continental Congress who was also a delegate to the convention that wrote the Constitution of the United States. This same man was later a governor of New Hampshire. There was a president of Harvard who was related to these New England Langdons.

Jervis Langdon was born in Oneida, New York, and had business experience in a number of other places before coming to Elmira in 1845. He prospered here, his chief business interests being lumber and coal. The first anthracite delivered in Chicago was shipped from the Pennsylvania coal fields by Mr. Langdon. This pioneering shipment went all the way by water—through canals in Pennsylvania and New York, Seneca Lake and the Great Lakes.

Mr. Langdon was also interested in civic and religious affairs. He was one of the founders of an anti-slavery church (now The Park Church) and did important work for the underground railroad and its stations in this area. He largely funded the present Park Church building.

He had three children: Susan who became Mrs. Theodore Crane, Olivia who married Mark Twain, and Charles, his only son.

16. Olivia Lewis Langdon 1810-1890.

Wife of Jervis Langdon and mother-in-law of Mark Twain. Ausburn Towner said that she made a home for her husband “that was always to him an element in his life of great helpfulness, force and strength.”

17. Langdon Clemens 1870-1872.

Son of Samuel Clemens and Olivia Langdon Clemens. There is both a plaster and bronze head of this child in the Arnot Art Museum in Elmira. This head was modeled by Augusta C. Graves, an artist of Buffalo where Mr. and Mrs. Clemens were living at the time.

18. Charles Jervis Langdon 1849-1916.

Son of the first Jervis Langdon and brother-in-law of Mark Twain. As a young man he was on the Mediterranean cruise of the *Quaker City*, a ship and a cruise made famous by Mark Twain in *The Innocents Abroad*. Twain was aboard as a correspondent for the *Alta California*, and he and young Langdon became friends. One day Langdon showed Twain an ivory miniature of his lovely sister Olivia. Twain was entranced and began to make plans to meet the original. He was encouraged and helped by Charles, and three years later, in February, 1870, Olivia Langdon became Mrs. Samuel Clemens in the parlor of the Langdon mansion.

Charles carried on the Langdon interests after his father's death. He was the father of Miss Ida, Julia Olivia who became Mrs. Edward Loomis, and his son Jervis.

19. Ida Clark Langdon 1849-1934.

Wife of Charles Langdon. Through her mother, Mrs. Langdon was a relative of the McDowells, one of the earliest families in this area.

20. Edward Eugene Loomis 1864-1937.

Husband of Julia Olivia Langdon. Mr. Loomis was at one time president of the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad. Many Elmira residents remember when he brought his family for Elmira visits in his private car.

21. Julia Olivia Langdon Loomis 1871-1948.

Wife of Edward Loomis, daughter of Charles Langdon and niece of Olivia Langdon Clemens.

22. Jervis Langdon 1875-1952.

Son of Charles Langdon; grandson of the first Jervis; nephew of Mrs. Samuel Clemens. Carried many of the Langdon interests in Elmira into the third generation. An Elmiran who remembers him well speaks of him as a "kind and gracious gentleman." The record shows that he was particularly kind and helpful to his uncle Mark Twain when Twain was old, ill and cast down by the death of his daughter Jean at Stormfield.

Mr. Langdon became master of Quarry Farm after the death of his aunt Mrs. Crane. He once told this writer that Henry Ford wanted the Mark Twain study for his Greenfield Museum of American History at Dearborn, Michigan.

Mr. Langdon wrote a fine paper called "*Mark Twain and Elmira*" published as a pamphlet by the *Chemung Historical Society*.

23. Eleanor Sayles Langdon 1878-1971.

Wife of Elmira's second Jervis Langdon and sister of the late Halsey Sayles, an Elmira lawyer active in civic and church affairs. Mrs. Langdon was an artist chiefly interested in sculpture. She studied for several years with Ernfred Anderson. Mr. Anderson says that she was very talented and that when she wished a piece cast in cement she did it herself. "And that" says Mr. Anderson, "was hard and dirty work."

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I am indebted to Mrs. Thelma King, Director of the Steele Memorial Library whose idea this was and who helped in many ways; to Miss Phyllis Morse, Reference Librarian and Mrs. Kenneth Weisman, Secretary to the Woodlawn Cemetery Commission who made necessary materials easily available; to Mrs. Charles Petrie, Mrs. Bela Tiff, Mr. Ernfred Anderson and Mr. Frederick Petrie for sharing memories with me. I am also indebted to Mr. Petrie for drawing the Langdon-Clemens plot in Woodlawn Cemetery, and to Miss Elsa Brookfield for translating the German sentence on Olivia Langdon Clemens' headstone.

Gabrilowitsch—Buried at Mark Twain’s Feet

by Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr.

The Mark Twain-Gabrilowitsch monument initiated a biographical sketch of Mark Twain’s son-in-law by Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr., entitled “Gabrilowitsch—Buried at Mark Twain’s Feet,” published in the Chemung Historical Journal, Vol. 22, No. 1 (September, 1976) pp. 2632-2638.

Visitors to the grave site of Mark Twain in Elmira’s Woodlawn Cemetery are often puzzled by the fact that what appears to be a monument to the famous author also contains, in a position of equal prominence, another medallion portrait and the name, Gabrilowitsch. “Who was Gabrilowitsch and why was his name added to Mark Twain’s memorial?” is a frequent remark. According to a story by Eva Taylor, however, (*Chemung Historical Journal*, June, 1973), it was Mark Twain who was added to a memorial for his son-in-law rather than the other way around. For more than twenty-five years, Mark Twain’s final resting place received no special recognition. When Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch was put in touch with Elmira sculptor Ernfred Anderson about a memorial for her husband who died in 1936, he suggested a monument that would honor both her father and her husband, and she agreed. The result was the present marble shaft with the bronze bas-relief portrait medallions and the names of both men, each outstanding in his chosen field.

Ossip Salomonovich Gabrilovich was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on Feb. 7, 1878, one of three sons of a lawyer of Jewish descent. In later life he used the German transliteration of his name, Gabrilowitsch, sometimes spelled with an accent on the “o” to aid in proper pronunciation, Gabril-OH-witsch. Mark Twain commented jokingly at his daughter’s wedding that it would take the rest of his life to learn to pronounce the name.

A child prodigy who began to study piano when he was five, Gabrilowitsch was encouraged by the famous musician, Anton Rubenstein, and studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory from which he graduated in 1894 at the age of sixteen, winning the Rubenstein prize. He then went to Vienna to study with Theodor Leschetikzy for two years, making his public debut with a recital in Berlin in 1896. This was followed by

successful concert tours in Germany, Austria, Russia, France and England before his first of several visits to the United States in 1900.

Clara Clemens and Ossip Gabrilowitsch first met in Vienna in 1898 during a Clemens family sojourn abroad. Clara wanted to study piano with Leschetikzy and found the master's prize pupil a sympathetic friend. They shared a common love of music, corresponded when separated and saw each other when they could. Clara turned from piano to voice lessons and eventually became proficient enough to appear on the concert stage. The courtship was a stormy one, marked by Clara's initial determination not to marry, by long separations while Ossip was on tour, and many disputes and reconciliations. Gabrilowitsch became well acquainted with the Clemens family both during their travels abroad and through visits to their home in the United States. Both he and Mark Twain enjoyed discussions and they conversed on almost every possible subject, barring music, according to Clara.

Married In 1909

Not until Oct. 6, 1909, more than ten years after they first met and five years after the death of Mrs. Clemens in Florence, Italy, were Clara Clemens and Ossip Gabrilowitsch married at Stormfield, the Clemens home in Redding, Conn. As described by Albert Bigelow Paine who was one of the guests, "October 6th was a perfect wedding-day. It was one of those quiet, lovely fall days when the whole world seems at peace.



Ossip Gabrilowitsch and Clara Clemens. Photo by Bank & Stoller.

Claude, the butler, with his usual skill in such matters, had decorated the great living-room with gay autumn foliage and flowers, brought in mainly from the woods and fields. They blended perfectly with the warm tones of the walls and furnishings, and I do not remember ever seeing a more beautiful room. Only relatives and a few of the nearest friends were invited to the ceremony.”

Clara’s younger sister, Jean, was her only bridesmaid. Jervis Langdon, her cousin and childhood playmate from Elmira, acted as best man, and, of course, Mark Twain himself gave the bride away. He wore, by request, the brilliant red Oxford academic gown he had received with his honorary doctorate two years before, and saw to it that everyone present signed the guest book. Friend, neighbor and fellow-author, William Dean Howells was among the guests. The couple were married by Twain’s life-long friend, the Rev. Joseph Twichell, who was one of the clergymen at his own wedding to Olivia Langdon in Elmira thirty-nine years earlier. Clara conspired with the old friend to omit the word, “obey” from the marriage vows.

The press was not informed until the last minute. Again let Paine explain. “Clemens had characteristically interviewed himself... , and it was necessary to hand the reporter a typewritten copy. Replying to the question (put to himself), ‘Are you pleased with the marriage?’ he answered: ‘Yes, fully as much as any marriage could please any other father. There are two or three solemn things in life and a happy marriage is one of them, for the terrors of life are all to come. I am glad of this marriage, and Mrs. Clemens would be glad, for she always had a warm affection for Gabrilowitsch.’ ”

A honeymoon in Atlantic City was interrupted when the groom was operated on for appendicitis less than two weeks after the wedding. As soon as he recovered, Clara wrote, “we sailed away for Europe to spend the rest of our lives—at least so we thought.” Within less than a year they were called back for Mark Twain’s final illness, arrived in Stormfield just five days before his death on April 21, 1910, and accompanied his body to Elmira for burial. Clara’s sister, Jean, had died suddenly less than four months earlier and she too was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery “dressed in the dainty gown she had worn at Clara’s wedding.” At that time the heartbroken father had cabled the Gabrilowitsches in Europe not to return.

Some of the sadness at the loss of loved ones was alleviated by the birth of a daughter, Nina, before the Gabrilowitsches left again for

Europe and settled in Munich. Ossip, successful as a concert pianist and conductor, also was doing some composing. The couple belonged to a wealthy, international and cosmopolitan social class that enjoyed and patronized music and art, travelled to fashionable places, and were waited on by staffs of well trained servants who saw to their every comfort—the Upstairs folks of “Upstairs-Downstairs.” But this genteel way of life was soon to be shattered by World War I with its fierce, intolerant nationalism and democratic rebellion of the Downstairs people. With the outbreak of war, Gabrilowitsch barely escaped internment in Germany as a Russian national and the family fled to Switzerland and back to the United States.

Detroit Symphony

Here Gabrilowitsch took out papers to become an American citizen, completing the process in Detroit. He made his American debut as a conductor with an especially assembled orchestra in New York City, and a year later, in 1918, he accepted the position as conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for one year, renewing his commitment for only one year at a time until his death. Under his direction the Detroit Symphony Orchestra became one of the best in the country and the period of his eighteen-year tenure is described as the “Golden Age of Music for Detroit.” Of Gabrilowitsch it was said, “his Detroit Symphony was the man, and the man was the Orchestra.”

His achievements in Detroit are impressive even to simply recount. When, at the end of his first session as conductor, Gabrilowitsch gave an ultimatum to Detroit to build a hall or lose him, the result was the construction in less than six month’s time of Detroit’s Orchestra Hall, dedicated on Oct. 23, 1919. Built at a cost of \$700,000, Orchestra Hall had a seating capacity of more than 2,000 and acoustical qualities that inspired lyrical descriptions. The impressive Renaissance building saw many “firsts.” In 1926, Gabrilowitsch formed the first National Youth Orchestra which later evolved into the National Arts Academy. From Orchestra Hall, on a Sunday in 1931, originated the first national radio broadcast of a live program of symphonic music.

Gabrilowitsch brought to the city, 268 Detroit premieres, 18 American premieres, and three world premieres. According to a Detroit newspaper, “he was credited with having raised the city from a provincial level in music to that plane on which the greatest music is regularly appreciated by huge audiences.” The list of artists that Gabrilowitsch

brought to Detroit reads like a musical “Who’s Who:” Mischa Elman, Pablo Casals, Artur Rubenstein, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Vladimir Horowitz, Wanda Landowska, Dame Myra Hess, Igor Stravinsky, Gregor Piatigorsky, Lotte Lehmann, Sergei Prokofiev, Jascha Heifetz, and George Gershwin are only a few.

Gabrilowitsch built a home in Detroit where he and Clara not only entertained the musical giants who came to town but also amateurs and youthful musicians who came for advice and encouragement. They also had a summer home on Mackinac Island. Although celebrated as a conductor, Gabrilowitsch never gave up giving concerts and was regarded as one of the four or five greatest pianists of the day. He also lectured, and composed many piano pieces and songs, an *Elegy* for cello and piano, and an *Overture-Rhapsodie* for orchestra. He was modest about the honors he received: honorary doctorates from Yale, the University of Michigan, Oberlin, Mt. Holyoke, and Wayne University; successes as guest conductor of the Philadelphia Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, and other leading orchestras in the United States and abroad. He was described as “that phenomenon in the world of music, an artist who was much bigger than he thought he was.”

Clara’s Comparison

Much has been written about his sense of humor which Clara compared to that of her father. She wrote, “In daily life the resemblance between the American musician and the American humorist was an amazing thing to watch; their pessimism about the human race, their search for universal justice and their love of humor.” Gabrilowitsch had the rare ability to appreciate and retell a joke on himself. Once while on a tour, he agreed to give an audition in his hotel parlor to an aspiring young piano student. The boy struggled through a series of pieces, each seemingly worse than the previous one. When at last he left, Gabrilowitsch came out for a breath of fresh air. He was greeted outside the room by a small group of the hotel staff who had gathered outside the door to listen. “At last we have heard you play,” exclaimed the spokesman. “Gosh, it was marvelous!” “So glad you enjoyed it,” was all the great pianist could manage to say.

When death came to Ossip Gabrilowitsch on Sept. 14, 1936, the *Detroit Free Press* headed a long obituary notice with the words, “Genius Pianist Is Dead at 58.” While Detroit mourned, preparations were made for the funeral and burial in Elmira. Again Jervis Langdon accompanied

another coffin back to Elmira. Again services, conducted by the Rev. Albert G. Cornwell of the Park Church, were held in the Langdon home, the coffin in the same place as those of Olivia and Samuel Clemens and daughters Susy and Jean. Interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery where Gabrilowitsch was buried, as he requested, at the feet of Mark Twain.

How can the career of Gabrilowitsch be assessed by a non-musician? It cannot be, of course. But according to *The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians*, "it is as a pianist that he is chiefly to be remembered. His playing was many sided and always evocative of keen delight. Primarily a poet and a student—he was endowed with a truly marvelous memory—his playing was often more reflective than dramatic. Yet just as often he was impelled by a fiery Russian temperament and astonished his hearers by the surging power of his performance as well as dazzling by its brilliance, or charmed by its poetic beauty."

As a conductor and artist, Gabrilowitsch was a friend and contemporary of such musical greats as Leopold Stokowski, Arturo Toscanini, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Serge Koussevitsky, Walter Damrosch, Bruno Walter, Jascha Heifetz and Fritz Kreisler. Was he their equal in genius? Did the Detroit Symphony under his direction reach the heights of the Boston Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Symphony? That judgment must be left to others. While posterity may not accord Gabrilowitsch as high a position in the history of music as Mark Twain in the field of American letters, one cannot read Clara Clemens' biography, *My Husband Gabrilowitsch*, without concluding that as a man and a husband he was indeed the equal of her famous father. Both together made hers a life full of excitement and satisfaction, first as the daughter of a world-famous author and then as the wife of a great pianist and conductor.

Clara herself never achieved the professional distinction as a musical artist that she sought. She gave many successful performances, often with her husband as accompanist, in concerts such as the one at the Park Church in Elmira on May 24, 1918. She failed, however, to win national acclaim as a professional musician. When she gave a concert at Aeolian Hall in New York in 1921, for example, the *New York Times* critic who described her as being "a charming stage picture and musically intelligent in all she aims to do," declared that she "did not convey to her hearers the sense of beauty of Wolf's passionate songs, or the literal words that a contralto voice should clothe with tenderness."

Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch was married a second time to Jacques Samossoud. Her second husband was also a Russian-born musician, formerly director of the Imperial Opera in Leningrad and later musical director of the Chicago Grand Opera Company and the National Opera in Washington. They lived in California, where she died in San Diego on Nov. 19, 1962. She was buried beside Ossip Gabrilowitsch in her native Elmira, 88 years after her birth at Quarry Farm. Jacques Samossoud and her daughter, Nina, both survived her and both died in 1966. Nina Gabrilowitsch, who never married, was the last of the direct descendents of Mark Twain to be buried in the Langdon-Clemens plot in Woodlawn Cemetery. The ashes of Jacques Samossoud were also buried in the family plot in an unmarked grave on the other side of Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch Samossoud, the only one of Mark Twain's children to outlive him.

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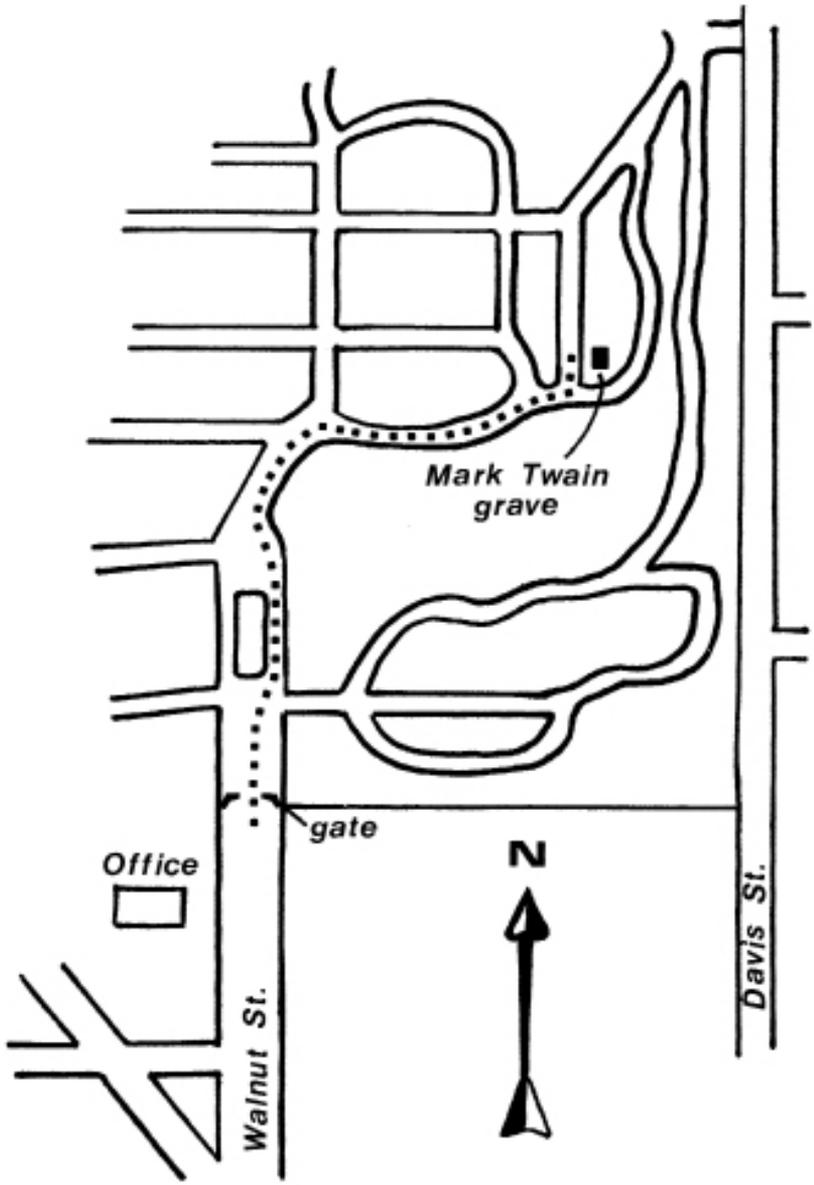
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Map of Woodlawn Cemetery. By Ron Owens.

Chapter Nine

Anecdotes

Mark Twain stories have circulated in Elmira for many generations. Some of these were written down and found their way into print while others are oral reminiscences still to be recorded. This collection of anecdotes is a sampling of the body of local folklore about Mark Twain with no claim to be complete. Although the number of people who remember when Mark Twain was a familiar figure in Elmira has dwindled, the prospector for Mark Twain stories can still hit pay dirt. It is not always possible to verify the historical accuracy of such stories but together they reveal the image of Mark Twain as seen by the people of Elmira.

Many of the stories illustrate Mark Twain's love for children and his ability to establish a special rapport with them. Although he did not like to be disturbed when he was writing, he wanted to test the response to his work by reading it aloud. He used his own children and family, and sometimes, in Elmira, the playmates of his children, as an audience. The stories of people who remembered hearing Mark Twain read parts of one or another of his books are numerous and constitute a sizeable part of the local Mark Twain folklore. One Elmiran, whose association with the Clemens family is well documented, missed such a reading.

Frances Petrie

Mrs. Charles A. Petrie, who died in 1975 at the age of 104, was for a long time the last intimate link with Mark Twain and his family. As a neighbor of the Langdons and the same age as Julia Langdon, Frances Darby was a friend and playmate of the Langdon children and often went with them to play with the Clemens children at Quarry Farm. Her father, Dr. Frank Darby, was Mark Twain's dentist when he was in Elmira. The source of the following reminiscences is Tom Byrne, Chemung County Historian and reporter, who interviewed Mrs. Petrie for the *Elmira Star-Gazette* and *Sunday Telegram*.

"Fan" Darby remembered very clearly the summer visits to Quarry Farm with Julia Langdon, Caroline Hall and other Elmira girls. She and Julia were nearly the same age as Susy Clemens. She recalled, "Mr. Clemens would be in his study, writing. Mrs. Clemens had a sheltered place for us to play, and there was a big outdoor chimney where we

cooked things. My big regret is not being present the day Mr. Clemens called down from the study and said, 'Children, come up here, I have something to read for you.' Then he read the girls the first two chapters of *The Prince and the Pauper*."

"He was always dressed in white. In winter it would be white serge, heavy; in summer he wore wrinkled-up linen.—Mr. Clemens never got up and rushed around.—He was just as funny as he could be." The last time she saw him was at the wedding of Julia Langdon to Edward Loomis in 1902. When Frances approached Mr. Clemens he said, "I believe I know you." "His eyes stuck out ... sharp eyes you know. He never looked dull for a minute," Mrs. Petrie recalled. "I said, 'I'm Fannie Darby' and he said, 'Oh, yes, you're Doctor Darby's daughter.' "

Mrs. Petrie was interviewed by a writer for the *National Geographic* in 1975, but her story of missing the reading of the manuscript of *The Prince and the Pauper* was changed in the published article to make her an eye-witness of the episode she always regretted she had not seen.

Other Reminiscences

Some living Elmirans with memories of Mark Twain include James Lewis, 82, retired refrigeration engineer, who was born and grew up on the East Hill, hiking the fields around Quarry Farm and collecting chestnuts in the fall from the trees on the Crane property. He recalls talking with Mark Twain on several occasions and telling him about a raft that he and some other boys made and floated on a pond in the clay pit.

Miss Mary Metzger, 92, lives at the Elcor Nursing Home. She remembers summer weekends with a friend who lived on East Hill when the two girls would hike over to Mark Twain's study and visit with the author, who, she recalled, would read portions of his books to them. Miss Metzger attended Park Place School when Jean Clemens was a pupil there and remembers her as a quiet, reserved girl who was not active socially because of her ill health. Susy and Clara Clemens were older and Miss Metzger did not know them personally although she described them as "very attractive." Miss Metzger and her mother attended Mark Twain's funeral in 1910 at the Langdon home. She remembers that the house was full and the crowd overflowed onto the lawn. A vivid memory is the blanket of red roses that covered his casket.

John Murphy, 94, another Elcor Nursing Home resident, was a Western Union messenger in Elmira in the 1890s. From the office he used to see Mark Twain get off the street car for his regular visits to the

Rathbun House where he would meet Charles Langdon for billiards. Then the two men, Mr. Murphy recalls, would walk around the corner to Klapproth's Saloon on Lake Street for refreshments and conversation. According to Mr. Murphy, Mark Twain rarely sent wires although he often received them. He remembers with amusement a time that he was delivering a telegram to the Langdon house and rang and rang the bell, receiving no answer until an irate General Charles Langdon finally came to the door himself.

Another Mark Twain story was collected from an Elmira raconteur, Jack Gilson, some years ago by Tom Byrne. "I worked at the Rathbun House around 1891 when Mark Twain used to play billiards there. He was a pretty good player. I was practicing one forenoon when he came in. No one else was there. He said, 'Young man, do you play billiards?' I said, 'Yes, I do, Mr. Clemens.' He smiled and said, 'Oh, you know me?' and I said, 'Who in Elmira doesn't?' Mark Twain loved billiards, whiskey, big cigars, and people. He was a very likeable chap, a very good talker, the soul of wit and humor."

The common element of the various recollections that have survived across the years is of a striking figure in white. Emory Strachen, mayor of Elmira from 1942 to 1955, remembered Mark Twain driving two white horses while wearing a white shirt with his white hair blowing in the breeze.

The Little Jewish Girl

A previously unpublished family story that illustrates both Mark Twain's ability to establish rapport with children and his interest in various religions concerns Lena Maltz, a little Jewish girl from Elmira. When Lena Maltz was in the fourth grade at School One, now the Beecher School, on Sullivan Street in Elmira, her teacher received an invitation to bring the class to Quarry Farm for an outing and a chance to meet Mark Twain.

Lena almost was not allowed to go. Her father objected to her riding in a wagon on the sabbath and was concerned that she might eat something that was non-kosher. Lena and her mother won his consent, however, and the little girl with bright red hair joined her class for a day she never forgot. Mark Twain, with the charm that always endeared him to children, showed them his study and talked with them about many things. When the class was served milk and cookies, Lena Maltz

explained to the interested author why she could not have any, and that she had almost not been able to come.

When the class returned, the teacher had each student write a thank you note. In hers, Lena wrote that she thought she could write stories too if she had such a lovely study and a lovely glass cat like the one on his mantle. The letter brought a reply from Mark Twain inviting Lena to come back again when he returned to Elmira and promising to keep her letter under his glass cat always. Her teacher kept this letter.

Several times the Langdon carriage called for the little girl to take her to Quarry Farm and bring her back, although her father never did approve. She enjoyed her visits with this famous adult who talked to her and listened to her as a person rather than as a mere child. He had many questions about “being Jewish,” and listened carefully as she repeated traditional stories that her Zada, or grandfather, had told to her. Many years later when Lena Maltz was married to Joseph Alpert and had a daughter of her own, she came across Mark Twain’s story, “Captain Stormfield’s Visit to Heaven,” and recognized in it one of her grandfather’s stories that she had retold on a visit to Quarry Farm.

One day after the visits to Quarry Farm had stopped, Lena Maltz received a note from Washington, D.C., enclosing a letter from Mark Twain that he had asked be sent to her. She believed that this indicated that the famous author, whom she knew as a friend, wanted to show her that he had continued his interest in trying to understand Jewish people. This letter was kept in the family and is published here for the first time through the courtesy of Mrs. Alpert’s daughter, Mrs. Edwin Freed, who is also the source for the account of her mother’s reminiscences of her visits to Mark Twain.

The letter was addressed to Simon Wolf, Washington, D.C. The return address was c/o Chatto & Windus, 111 St. Martin’s Lane, London, W.C., Nov. 8, 1899.

Dear Sir:

In your introduction (page 10) you say that the members of enlisted Jews was considerably in excess of the &c &c.

I take it you mean that in the two armies there were more Jews to their total population of 150,000 than there were of all the other

peoples (comprehended in, crossed out) to the North & South's total population (which seems to have been about 31,000,000 though I do not find that you mention the aggregate.) I have written that awkwardly & stupidly but you will understand.

Jews, 8,227. Population, 150,000

Whole America's population

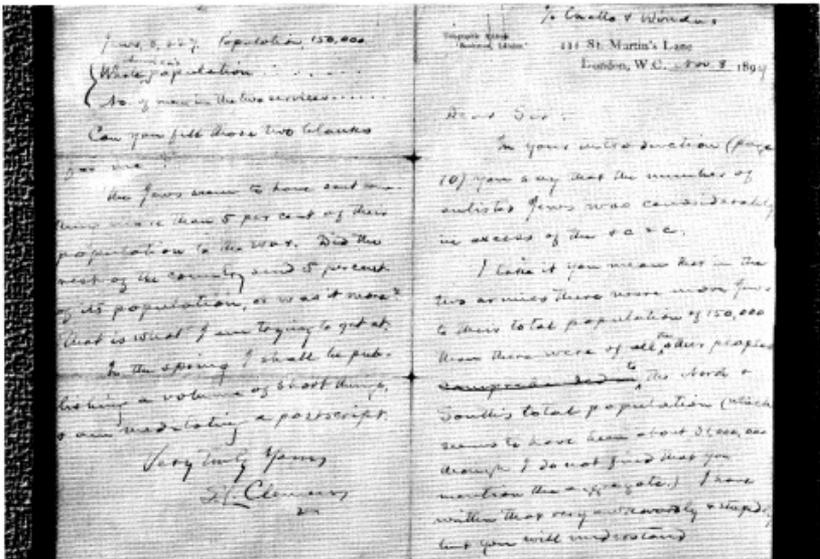
No. of men in the two services

Can you fill those two blanks for me?

The Jews seem to have sent something more than 5 per cent of their their population to the war. Did the rest of the country send 5 per cent of its population, or was it more? That is what I am trying to get at.

In the spring I shall be publishing a volume of short things, & am meditating a postscript.

Very Truly Yours
S. L. Clemens



Clemens letter. Published for the first time through the courtesy of Mrs. Louise Freed.

As with so many other persons whose lives touched that of Mark Twain, the contact was a treasured life-long memory. As Mrs. Freed explained, “it had given Mother one of her first experiences as an individual.”

Tossing Apples At Trains

The author of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huck Finn* could relate to children on their own level, not by talking down but by meeting them as individuals. A chance meeting with Mark Twain created a memory that enriched the life of a prominent Elmiran. S. Edward Rose (1876-1964) became board chairman of Rose, Kimball and Baxter, a wholesale firm, author of three novels, a civic leader, and president for twenty-eight years of Elmira’s Steele Memorial Library. A “Mark Twain–Elmiran” contest run by the newspaper in 1935, furnished the opportunity to write down the story of an afternoon that remained a vivid memory after more than half a century. The account by S. Edward Rose, was published in the *Elmira Star-Gazette*, December 5, 1935.

At about 4:30 on a summer afternoon in 1883, I was standing on the south side of the Washington Avenue Bridge. In my small hand was an apple which I intended to land within the stack of the engine drawing westbound Erie Number One. The apple, true to its mark, shot downward. Out of the billows of vapor and smoke my shrill voice proclaimed: “Jumpin’ Christmas, I hit it!”

As the ponderous train thundered under the bridge, I turned to dash across the roadway to the other side, and collided with something.

“Jumpin’ Christmas, you hit me!” echoed a voice. The smoke swirled aside, revealing a man in rumpled white clothes with a big cigar in his mouth.

“Gimme one,” he demanded. With the apple I supplied, he strode to the other side and let fly. It hit the roof of the last car and bounded off.

“Hit it, by gum!” he announced and slapped me on the back.

“Anybody kin do that,” I yelled; “you’d ought to pop one down the smokestack the way I did.”

“All right,” he said, “where’s your smoke-stack?”

All day long a switch engine plied back and forth beneath the bridge. With each puff of the exhaust, at least a peck of roasted apples popped merrily on the spark arrester within the bowl-shaped stack.

“Look at ’em jump!” he chuckled and squeezed my hand. I liked him.

It was hot. The crew lolled sleepily on their seats in the cab. It was a good time to practice. My acquaintance proved an apt pupil. The pockets and lining of my jacket were soon emptied of fruit. I held out the last apple.

“You keep it,” he said.

“No, you,” I demurred.

He produced a nickel. “Heads, I win; tails, you lose,” he decreed.

The engine chugged toward the bridge. Too late I saw the engineer peering up at us. I caught at the man’s arm, but only deflected his aim.

The apple bounced from the boiler casing into the cab where the fireman was sitting. The engine, which was moving slowly, stopped. Simultaneously the crew jumped down, one crossing the tracks toward the west approach to the bridge and the other toward the east.

Appalled, the man and I looked at each other. My heart pounded.

“We’re in for it,” he said.

“They can’t ketch me,” I said, “but I ain’t sure about you.” I crawled up the sloping iron

truss to its level center member and lay flat. The man held his ground.

Hot and angry, the engine men arrived at about the same time.

Missing me, they asked the man if “the young devil” who was always shooting apples was his son.

“Gentlemen,” I heard him say, “do I correctly observe that you have left your engine unattended? Unless you return at once, I shall feel it my duty to report your violation of rule to President Jewett.”

From the way those two hurried back to their work, I realized that my unknown friend must be some one pretty high up. When I came down, his eyes were twinkling but he said:

“You can see, Sonny, can’t you, that you might have been the cause of a serious accident? I guess you won’t be throwing anything more at trains, will you?”

“No, sir,” I replied earnestly, and in my relief overlooked that it had been his shot that had provoked the crisis.

“What’s your name and where do you live?” he asked as he relit his cigar.

“Eddie,” I said, and, pointing to the substantial brick house nearby, told him that my grandfather had built it. “It was built right after the college and was the first house up this way.”

He moved the cigar and pursed his lips in a silent whistle.

To be polite, I said: “What’s your name?”

The name he gave meant nothing to me. I was seven.

He said: “I guess you like the railroad, don’t you?”

“You bet!” I replied. “When I grow up I’m going to be an engineer.”

Then I told him that I kept a book with the numbers of the freight cars in it.

“That must be a pretty big book,” he observed.

“Yes, sir. Wouldn’t you like to see it?”

“Some other day,” he said. “I’ve got to be getting along.”

“It’s right down there,” I urged, and pointed to a pile of ties below the bridge on the west bank of the tracks.

With my hand in his we left the bridge and returned to the tracks. The ties were piled crosswise, leaving innumerable pigeon holes. From one of these I took out a ledger that my father had discarded. But the man had spied the old shoes that I kept in the ties. There must have been a hundred of them.

Most were flattened by car wheels. I told him that I never put them on the main tracks, but only on the siding where the trains went slowly. He seemed puzzled.

“They make dandy bumps,” I explained. He agreed that they would.

He weighed a small shoe in his hand musingly. “This one,” he said, “was worn by a beautiful princess named Rosina. She...”

“Oh no, sir,” I corrected; “my Aunt Fannie wore that.”

“I repeat,” he replied severely, “Rosina. You see this broken strap? Well, one dark night Rosina tried to escape from the castle in which her cruel uncle had imprisoned her because she would not marry a rich but selfish foreigner.”

As he proceeded to weave the brave struggle of the princess, I forgot about Aunt Fannie’s rights in the matter. He took me into a never-never land, from the contemplation of which my mother’s voice heartlessly summoned me.

We slid from the tie pile. "Now you run, Eddie," he admonished, "or you won't get any supper!"

I watched him until the white suit blurred into the gloom of Railroad Avenue.

At supper my mother was visibly worried by my excited recital.

My father reprimanded: "Don't ever let me hear of you talking to a strange man again."

"But he wasn't strange, Papa," I remonstrated; "he told me his name."

"Who did he say he was?"

"Mark Twain."

My parents exchanged startled glances; then Father sniffed: "It couldn't be him."

"But it could be," Mother differed. "How did he look, Eddie?"

"His eyebrows were kind of bushy," I answered, "and he had a droopy kind of mustache and when he took off his hat his hair wasn't combed. He talked kinda slow like and I wasn't afraid of him."

"It was Mark, all right," Father conceded, then said to me: "Get that book on the parlor table."

I knew which one he meant. I had looked at the pictures a hundred times. Father read "Innocents Abroad" frequently. I gave him the book.

He lifted me to his lap, then said impressively: "The man who threw away our apples is the one who wrote this book!"

Cub Reporter's Interview

Any classification of Twain lore would have to include a category of Interview Stories. A celebrity for most of his adult life, Mark Twain was "interviewed" whenever and wherever he travelled. Although he had no aversion to public recognition and his own experience made him sympathetic to the reporter's job, the ritual must have been annoying at times. One such interview was published in the Elmira Daily Advertiser, April 4, 1907.

For an hour last evening the youngest reporter on the *Advertiser*, first by hints, then by pleadings and finally by a direct demand, sought an assignment to interview "Mark Twain."

"What do you wish to ask Mr. Clemens?" inquired the city editor.

"Oh, I don't know; I'll think of something on the way up to General Langdon's," answered the scribe. "Wherever Mark Twain goes, they always interview him, don't they?" and to this argument there was no convincing defense.

So away started the reporter, smiling joyfully at his success in securing the assignment.

"Ask him what he thinks of the new forward movement in Elmira," finally directed the city editor.

"Ask him to write an article on 'How Best to Keep Elmira Going Ahead,'" came another voice from an inner corner of the office.

"Ask Mr. Clemens if he wore his white suit from New York to Elmira," said the telegraph editor, as the reporter, filled with the importance of his mission, finally fled from the office.

But to obtain the much desired interview was found to be quite another matter. Resting after the fatigue of the day, Mr. Clemens was found in the handsome library of General Langdon's Main Street home. Members of the

family and Mr. Clemens had just finished dinner and the humorist was not smoking.

To the *Advertiser's* representative it was explained that Mr. Clemens positively could not be interviewed.

"I have really nothing to say," said the well known former Elmiran.

Then seeing the look of disappointment spreading over the face of his inquisitor, the hero of many a good story appeared to relent.

"Will you really be badly disappointed if you can't get something from me?" asked the veteran author, kindly.

"Yes, I will," came the answer stoutly, but with an uncontrollable quaver.

"Well, then, I'll tell you what we'll do. I have not been 'interviewed' in a long time. In fact, I stopped being interviewed some time ago, but you just ask any question you wish and answer them for yourself, and we'll see how you manage it. But wait—ask me what I think of the new forward movement in Elmira, and I'll tell you that I think it is one of the most gratifying things I have known of in a long time. I am delighted to observe the greatly changed aspect of things here, and I can to some extent, appreciate the effort it has cost. I think Elmira is the ideal location for our big new organ industry as well as for all the other new concerns you are endeavoring to bring here. I appreciate the spirit in which the *Advertiser* seeks to obtain my views, and I deeply appreciate the honors that all wish to do me, but really, I would rather have my time to myself while here. I am just making a family visit and want to have all my time undisturbed."

Mark Twain's Kindly Rebuff

Another Elmira interview was recorded by Elmira's famous newsman, Frank E. Tripp (1882-1964), who looked back in a column in the Elmira Star-Gazette, January 28, 1952.

When I was very green my editor said: "Sam Clemens is arriving on the 4:30. Go to the station and see him." Today that assignment would thrill even a topnotcher, but it was hardly over routine where I cubbed.

Mark Twain was a familiar figure in Elmira. He courted and married there, wrote several of his books there, rests there now. Old heads had given up getting a printable wisecrack out of him. So this time they sent a kid. It was my first celebrity interview—and I muffed it.

The shaggy-haired, white-clad writer climbed awkwardly from the train. I ambled alongside. He didn't awe me as he should. Jim Corbett was bigger news to me. It wasn't stage-fright that screwed up the interview; it was just plain juvenile dumbness.

"Mister Clemens," I saluted. I recall pondering if I should call him Mr. Twain; then remembered that we never called our townswoman Mrs. Twain. After walking half the station platform he noticed me.

"Well, what is it?" he inquired.

"My editor asked me to come to the station and see you," I replied.

"That's nice of your editor," said the humorist. I'll tell you later what else he said; it's the nubbin of the story. The two sentence contact ended with the push-off yet to be revealed; and taught me how not to start an interview.

“Did Clemens have anything to say?” my editor inquired when I returned to the office.

“Wouldn’t talk,” I said. Thus a dull paragraph told next morning just that S. L. Clemens was back in town.

When the sheet had gone to press and the nightly post-mortem was in sway, I registered my first gripe about notables who come up from the newsroom and push off humble followers of their craft. Mark Twain didn’t deserve my wrath that night.

He had been kind to me and I didn’t know it.

“What did you say to him?” put in venerable Ed Adams, who had palled with Gilbert and Sullivan and who was one of Sam Clemens’ local intimates.

“I told him that my editor sent me to see him,” I replied.

“You said ‘to see him’,” chuckled Mr. Adams, who could see it coming. “And what did he say?”

“The old crab just grunted, ‘That’s nice of your editor. Run along and tell him that you did.’”

“Why, you blasted little idiot!” roared the seasoned old-timer. Then he dashed off a paragraph for the next issue.

As my humiliation was reprinted in paper after paper, invariably it was captioned, “Cub sees Twain, but not his joke.”

That’s one reason I have never written an essay on the appreciation of humor.

MARK TWAIN never was editor of the paper when I started, though today some of the boys boast that he was. He did kid the natives and work off some of his tomfoolery in its col-

umns; signed his communications “Scat.” Unhappily the files are burned.

Local legend has it that back when monuments were springing up like mushrooms on Gettysburg’s battlefield, Mark ran a campaign on his own in the *Elmira Advertiser*. He suggested that sight was being lost of the man to whom humanity owed its greatest debt. He started a movement to correct the oversight; to erect a monument to Adam.

Maneuvered as only he could do it, he kept the idea of a bust foremost. When he had written out his fun and time came to engage a sculptor, he wrote a request that anybody who had a daguerreotype of Adam should please send it in.

The search for Twain gems goes merrily on, but there’s little left in the well. Jervis Langdon, his nephew and executor, spent much time in Twain’s company when casual unrecorded morsels could have dropped. He can add no more to the saga; nor can he authenticate some of the reputedly new discoveries of Twain wisdom.

The lovable free and easy reminiscencers who knew Mark Twain around Elmira are gone. Of those who sat by the hour telling things Mark said to them, the games they beat him at billiards, the drinks he didn’t buy them, I always had deep suspicion.

I suspected that their intimate acquaintance with the somewhat stand-offish funny man amounted mostly to a nod or beck. As did mine.

Twain Witticisms

The following account appeared in the Chemung County Historical Society Scrapbook, Vol. 116, p. 28.

Mark Twain was returning to Elmira aboard a Lackawanna train that was running way behind schedule. Much disturbed over the repeated delays, he chastised everyone that worked for the railroad. At Nichols, a few miles from Elmira, the train ran over a skunk.

Since the evening was very hot, all the windows were open wide to catch all the air possible. Instantly the unpleasant odor was everywhere, causing everyone to complain. Mark Twain's comment was, "It is just what I had hoped for—the train has hit an engineer."

The following account appeared in the The Chemung Historical Journal, Vol. 4, No. 1 (September, 1958), p. 514.

Arthur S. Fitch of the bookstore of Fitch & Billings, patronized by Mark Twain because it was next door to the offices of J. Langdon & Co., suggested that Mr. Twain try one of the new stylographic pens that had just been invented. "Bring it back if you don't like it," said Mr. Fitch. The very next day Mark Twain was back with the pen. Placing it on the counter he remarked, "this has been misrepresented to both you and me. That, sir, is not a pen at all, but a nail in disguise."

A Twain-Beecher Story

The following account was written by W. Charles Barber, and appeared in the Elmira Star-Gazette, August 1, 1954.

Mark Twain and Thomas K. Beecher were great friends. One Sunday Mr. Beecher bumped into Mark Twain at the Langdon Home on the corner across Church Street from the Park Church. They had a lot to talk about and down they sat on the grass, their backs against a tree. The minutes flew along in conversation between two men who never had the slightest difficulty in putting their thoughts into words.

The time for the morning service came and went. No Beecher in the pulpit. The organist played his opening music again and again. At length someone found Beecher in the Langdon yard and he hustled across the street for his morning discourse, with Clemens no doubt chuckling at the consternation the visit had caused.

A Mark Twain “First”

The following account appeared in the Chemung County Historical Society Scrapbook, Vol. 119, p. 18 and Vol. 203, p. 9.

Mark Twain was the first writer to submit a typewritten manuscript to a publisher and two Elmirans helped him do it.

Whether the manuscript was *Tom Sawyer*, *Huck Finn*, or *Life on the Mississippi* depends on the source of the story.

The two young Elmirans were Harry M. Clarke and Jacob B. Coykendall, who had learned to operate the new typewriter, a Remington with only capital letters.

These two transcribed from Mark Twain’s original, hand-written manuscript. First, one would type and the other would hold the copy. Then they traded places.

When they finished, every word and letter was capitalized. In order to properly prepare the copy for the publisher, every character had to be marked for upper or lower case and for italics. This was done with a system of underlining that they devised.

Twain Hoax

Mark Twain loved to invent stories which he did with much authentic-sounding detail but always including some obvious absurdity to alert the careful reader. He wrote one such story of a fictitious murder trial from Elmira. It is preserved in a clipping dated 1869 in a Chemung County Historical Society Scrapbook, Vol. 75, p. 21.

REMARKABLE MURDER TRIAL

To the Editor of *The Tribune*.

SIR: The Wilson Trial came to an end yesterday. In some respects this was the most remarkable case that has ever had a place upon the criminal records of the country. It excited great interest in this part of the State, and, during the last ten days, the court-room has been pretty generally crowded with eager listeners. The facts in the Wilson case were simply these: On the 17th of February last, George L. Roderick provoked a quarrel with Dr. R. Wilson, in front of the Union Hotel in this place. Wilson put up with a good deal of abuse before he even showed temper. He even tried to pacify Roderick, but to no purpose. Roderick called him a thief, a liar, a swindler; yet Wilson bore it all calmly. Roderick grew more excited, and heaped one opprobrious epithet after another upon Wilson, and finally called him a member of the New York Legislature. At this, Wilson sprang to his feet, and remarking to Roderick that he would not take that from any man, shot him dead with an axe-handle. Such was the evidence elicited upon the trial. The Court acquitted Wilson, upon the ground that the provocation was sufficient.

MARK TWAIN

Elmira, N.Y., April 29.

Mark Twain As A Witness

In 1877 Mark Twain was involved in a suit for damages brought by Charles C. Duncan, captain of the Quaker City on the trip to the Holy Land that furnished the material for Innocents Abroad. Duncan also sued the New York Times for libel in printing an interview with Mark Twain. In the summer of 1880, Mark Twain gave testimony in the case by deposition in Elmira. His comments were reported in the local paper, the clipping of which is reproduced here, taken from the Chemung County Historical Society Scrapbook Vol. 75, p. 32. Duncan was awarded twelve cents damages against the Times, and wrote to Mark Twain asking for three autographs. See Mark Twain—Howells Letters edited by Henry Nash Smith, William H. Gibson, and Frederick Anderson, Cambridge, Mass., 1960, II, 865-867.

MARK TWAIN AS A WITNESS.

His Testimony in a Hundred Thousand
Dollar Libel Suit.

A party of unusually intelligent looking gentlemen assembled at the law office of Edgar Denton, corner of lake and Water streets, this morning. These were Samuel L. Clemens and his two lawyers, Messrs. Whitfield and Green, Mr. Heath, attorney for Captain Charles C. Duncan, and two lawyers for Geo. Jones of the *New York Times*. Some months ago a suit was brought by Captain Duncan against Geo. Jones as treasurer for the *Times*, for libel, the damages claimed being \$100,000. The alleged libel consisted in the publication in the *Times* of a letter from Hartford, Conn., Mr. Clemens's home, containing an alleged interview with Mr. Clemens in which Captain Duncan is not spoken of in a flattering way. The legal representatives were here to-day by appointment to examine Mr. Clemens before Edgar Denton as referee. Mr. Clemens held a copy of the *Times* letter in his left hand and went slowly over the column telling what he said and what he did not say to the *Times* correspondent. In one place Mr. Clemens admitted to having said something about "animated flatulence," but not in the way reported by the *Times* representative, at the conclusion of the letter there was found to be very little that Mr. Clemens had actually said, the writer having drawn chiefly upon his imagination, and clothed the expressions of the author of "Innocents Abroad" in unfamiliar apparel. Mr. Clemens branded many of the sentences as entirely fictitious so far as he was concerned. Mr. Clemens had been a passenger on the steamship Quaker City enroute to the Holy Land and said that Captain Duncan was the ostensible commander, but he thought he did not exercise his full authority. He did not

remember that he had characterized Captain Duncan as the head waiter, nor did he cherish any ill feeling against the captain. He admitted that Captain Duncan had stirred him up on one or two occasions. The captain had lectured some on temperance and had told it in one of his lectures that when Mr. Clemens applied for passage he represented himself as a Baptist clergyman in ill health from San Francisco. Another libel that was Mr. Clemens said Capt. Duncan had told in a temperance lecture, that when Mr. Clemens came to him his breath was laden with the fumes of a very poor quality of whisky. Mr. Clemens was a little astonished that Captain Duncan could judge so well and remember so faithfully for ten years the quality of Mr. Clemens's breath. Mr. Clemens had never begun any proceedings against Mr. Duncan, for the reason, he presumed, that he never paid much attention to such things anyway. If he saw Captain Duncan again he should take the pains to speak to him. The last time he had any communication was in 1877, when he sent him fifty dollars for the benefit of a charitable institution.

The suit brought by Captain Duncan is for the alleged libel contained in the letter to which we have already alluded. Whether Mr. Clemens or the *New York Times* is responsible is the question to be settled. Mr. Clemens admits that he talked with the *Times* correspondent and that the latter was writing during the conversation, but he did not think in short-hand. No manuscript copy of the letter was shown him before publication. He rather expected it but it did not come.

Mr. Clemens gave his testimony in his peculiar deliberate manner, puffing at a cigar between thoughts. His hair is becoming quite gray and his eyebrows are lengthening over eyes which by habit he keeps nearly closed.

Appendix A

An Abridged Chronology of Mark Twain in Elmira

This is not a complete list of all the days Mark Twain spent in Elmira but does include those that were important for the reasons noted.

- | | | |
|------|--------------|---|
| 1867 | June | Met Charles J. Langdon on <i>Quaker City</i> cruise. |
| | December | First meeting with Livy in New York City. |
| 1868 | August 24 | First visit to Langdon Home.
Stayed until September 8. |
| | September 29 | Returned to Elmira and the next day
fell from wagon, extending his stay. |
| | November 23 | First Mark Twain Lecture in Elmira,
“The American Vandal Abroad.” |
| 1869 | February 4 | Langdons gave permission for
a formal engagement. |
| | March 17 | Read proofs with Livy of <i>The Innocents
Abroad</i> until the first week in May. |
| | April 17 | Anonymous article, signed “S’cat” written by
Mark Twain in defense of Thomas K. Beecher. |
| | Summer | Spent most of the summer with the Langdons. |
| 1870 | January 21 | Arrived in Elmira to prepare for wedding. |
| | February 2 | Wedding of Olivia Louise Langdon and
Samuel L. Clemens in the Langdon home. |

	June	Mark Twain nursed Jervis Langdon, Livy's father, who died August 6, 1870.
	July 15	Signed contract in Elmira with The American Publishing Co. of Hartford to publish <i>Roughing It</i> .
1871	March 18	Moved to Quarry Farm.
	Summer	Completed <i>Roughing It</i> and wrote several sketches and lectures.
	July 25	"A New Beecher Church" written by Mark Twain at Buffalo.
1872	March 19	Olivia Susan, "Susy," Clemens born in Elmira.
	June 2	Langdon Clemens buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.
1874	April	In the new study built for him by the Cranes, Mark Twain worked on <i>Tom Sawyer</i> .
	June 8	Clara Langdon Clemens born at Quarry Farm.
	July	Worked on play <i>Colonel Sellers, Fables, "A True Story"</i> and <i>Undertaker's Love Story</i> .
1876	Summer	Began <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> .
	August	Writing <i>1601</i> , began a notebook of children's sayings, "A Record of Small Foolishnesses," and "The Canvasser's Tale."
1877	Summer	Wrote 400 pages of <i>The Prince and the Pauper</i> , completed <i>Simon Wheeler, The Amateur Detective</i> (unpublished play). Worked on "Some Rambling Notes of an

Idle Excursion,” and “Loves of Alonzo Fitz Clarence and Rosannah Ethelton.”

- August 25-27** Wrote about John T. Lewis and the Runaway Horse.
- 1878 **March 29** Brief visit before leaving for Europe on April 11, 1878.
- 1879 **September 4** Worked on *A Tramp Abroad*.
- October** Monument to Adam Petition.
- October 18** Introduced General Hawley at a campaign meeting.
- 1880 **July 26** Jane Lampton, “Jean,” Clemens born in Elmira.
- Summer** Finished *The Prince and the Pauper*; worked on *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*; worked on “A Cat Story” (unpublished).
- August 22** Appeared as a witness in a libel trial.
- October 19** Hired Katy Leary, an Elmira girl, as Livy’s personal maid.
- 1881 **Summer** Worked on rewriting *Hamlet* and *The American Claimant*.
- 1882 **Summer** Worked on *Life on the Mississippi*.
- 1883 **Summer** Finished *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- July 21** Measured 817 feet of roadway at Quarry Farm with a foot rule for an English history game.

- 1884 **Summer** Read proofs on *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
Worked on *Tom and Huck Among the Indians*.
- December 18** Lectured in Elmira during tour with
George Washington Cable.
- 1885 **Summer** Arrived in June and stayed until September.
- 1886 **Summer** Started *A Connecticut Yankee*
in *King Arthur's Court*.
- July 21** Lectured at Elmira Reformatory.
- 1887 **Summer** Worked on *A Connecticut Yankee*
in *King Arthur's Court*.
- 1888 **Summer** Worked on *A Connecticut Yankee*
in *King Arthur's Court*.
- September 11** Reading at Elmira Reformatory.
- 1889 **July 3** Theodore Crane, brother-in-
law, died at Quarry Farm.
- Summer** Finished *A Connecticut Yankee*
in *King Arthur's Court*.
- August** Kipling visited Mark Twain in Elmira.
- 1890 **November 28** Mrs. Jervis Langdon, Livy's mother, died.
- 1895 **May** Returned from Europe to prepare
for world lecture tour.
- July 2** Contract on stones with Mrs.
Thomas K. Beecher.
- July 14** Lectured to inmates of the
Elmira Reformatory.

	July 14	Left on World Tour which ended July 31, 1896.
1896	August 23	Susy buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.
1902	November 29	Mark Twain attended wedding of niece Julia Langdon and Edward Loomis.
1903	Summer	Hoping to improve Livy's health at Quarry Farm. Wrote <i>A Dog's Tale</i> .
1904	July 14	Livy buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.
1907	January 10	Mark Twain present at Clara's recital in Park Church.
	April 3	Dedicated organ at Park Church.
1909	December 26	Jean buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.
1910	April 24	Mark Twain buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Appendix B

Samuel Langhorne Clemens

JERVIS LANGDON (1875-1952) was the author of two pamphlets about his uncle, Mark Twain. These were published in limited editions for circulation among his family and friends. Facsimile copies of these pamphlets follow as Appendices B and C. They are made available through the courtesy of his son, Jervis Langdon.

Some Reminiscences and Some Excerpts from Letters and Unpublished Manuscripts

by Jervis Langdon

Most of this material was collected shortly after Mr. Clemens' death in 1910 for the entertainment primarily of people in Elmira, N.Y., who had known, or whose parents had known, Mr. and Mrs. Clemens during the summers they spent in that city, Mrs. Clemens' former home.

In trying to do honor to my uncle in this paper I feel I deserve your commendation at least for being generous, for Mr. Clemens was suspicious of me from the very first as shown by this telegram to my father, who was away from home when I was born:

Hartford, Conn., January 27, '75.

CHAS. J. LANGDON:

Congratulations from all the household but I suggest in the friendliest spirit that a lad who takes this sort of advantage of his father so early in life is a party that will bear watching...

SAML. CLEMENS.

That this was long ago when the Western Union had time to take an interested look at what was offered it is suggested by a footnote on the yellow blank:

Held for correction till 5:00 P.M.

Be it remembered that, no matter how we may have clung to him afterwards, Mr. Clemens himself made the original advances. That this was to be so hardly appeared in the commencement of intercourse, which took place in the Fall of '67 in the smoking room of the good ship "Quaker City;" the sturdy side-wheeler which, bearing the fortunes of the "Innocents" and solicitous of them to the extent of waiting in the harbor for a storm to pass, had just put to sea. A game of cards was on and my father, Charles Jervis Langdon, a youth of eighteen, one of the audience, attempted to correct one of the players, a slender westerner with curly, mahogany-colored hair, who showed the frontiersman's ability to care for himself with the remark: "Young man, there's a prayer-meeting forward in the dining saloon and they need you there." Attempts at getting acquainted lagged somewhat after that, but the time came when the westerner, on the voyage as a newspaper correspondent, needed a friend. This ship's company was made up, like all such parties, even unto the present day, of various kinds of people. It was one of the first, if not the first, of such Mediterranean cruises out of New York. America was advertising herself in Europe with specimens of all she was producing, from quiet, culture-seeking, well bred people to vulgar deriders of things different from "the way we do in our country." In the letters he was sending to the *New York Herald* some of the party drew the fire of the correspondent, particularly in connection with the lack of courtesy shown foreigners visiting the ship. He ended one letter by saying something like this: "Would that we had more real ladies like Mrs. F. on board!" This article found its way back to the ship just before Mr. Clemens returned from a side trip, and it was the pleasure of the youthful card coach to espy the discredited man of letters coming on board and to give him a detail just the temper of Mrs. This and Mrs. That, with the sound advice that he keep pretty closely to his cabin for a few days, and give the weather a chance to clear.

Whether my father covertly agreed with the criticisms Mark Twain had made in the *Herald*, whether it was because the score was even between them, or whether it was just because they couldn't help

liking each other, the friendship seemed to begin seriously with this episode and Mr. Clemens had one prop to lean on some time before his inevitable reinstatement in popular favor.

Among my father's chief treasures on board was a charming miniature of his sister Olivia. It charmed Mr. Clemens. When the voyagers had returned he had an opportunity to meet his friend's sister in New York, and not long afterward he wrote the friend that he would come to visit him in Elmira on a certain day. Had there been any idea of where the real interest lay, every measure, I believe, even to the wrecking of the train, would have been resorted to to ward off the portentous event, for Samuel Clemens was a rather rough diamond at that time, and my father idolized his sister. Without further consulting the time table Mr. Clemens characteristically chose that train with the biggest sounding name (the Cannon Ball, I believe it was), and towards the middle of the day my father received this telegram: "Train stops every fifteen minutes and stays three quarters of an hour, figure out when it will arrive and meet me."

Accompanied by an old friend, my father went down the road to meet the new friend, whose entertaining humor and irresistible magnetism he hoped would balance up with the family for all the uncouth manners and looks, and make a short visit endurable. They found him in the smoker, in a yellow duster and a very dirty, old straw hat. His wardrobe was compressed into such small compass that it didn't really appear he had brought any.

The visit however went pretty well until Mr. Clemens took my father aside and told him he must leave the next day, and admitted the reason to be that he was in love with the original of the miniature. My father, at first speechless, told him there was a train that day. But he was a true fighter, and in the end he won the field, won it in his own inimitable way. He gave references, remarking, in the case of one of them, that he had lied for this friend so well it would be a pity if the man in question couldn't lie once for him. But his ways and his greatness of character more and more spoke for themselves to the point of making the need of references an absurdity.

The more recent attempts by some writers to prove that the influence of Mark Twain's "in-laws," more particularly the influence of his wife, retarded his progress towards greatness, in fact resulted in his falling short of the rough Rabelaisian artistic triumphs to which he might have attained, have proved an interesting discussion. I, naturally enough probably, agree with the many who feel, as Mr. Clemens himself felt, that

he would have fallen far short of his best work without the appreciative, yet exacting, editing and suggesting and restraining of his wife. He was sure of it, and his daughter is sure of it. I think those best qualified to judge are all sure of it, for, as I have said, he was, to begin with, a rough diamond.

It has been said he was given to swearing. I believe he was and that as a young man the habit had quite a hold on him. And yet I can remember hearing him swear only once, and that after I was grown up, which shows he was careful when the children were about. And what I did hear was entirely different from the heavy, guttural, vulgar thing we call profanity. It was so different I failed at first to recognize it. It came trippingly, almost musically, from the tongue. It was artistic compared with the ordinary variety. I can confirm one funny story that has been told about it. One day Mrs. Clemens was confined to her bed. She heard her husband in the distance. Something had happened. He was swearing. Soon he arrived at her door and before he had time even to greet her she repeated so far as she could remember it all of the language she had just heard. Mr. Clemens looked at her dumbfounded for a moment, then doubled over in mirth: "Livy, Livy," said he, "You have the words but not the tune."

Some extracts from letters, chiefly to his mother-in-law, Olivia Lewis Langdon, an appreciative recipient, show a lighting up of ordinary family news, which I suppose, accounts for the present existence of the letters.

From Buffalo, the first home, to his new father and mother:

We are all set and ready for you. Livy has been downtown and bought a spring-lounge and a spring mattress to put on it. Father can lie there and be comfortable and never discommode me, because I can lie just as comfortably standing up. All I want is a chance. We are waiting and hoping for the telegram announcing your departure for Buffalo.

This from a Paris address:

Things go along just the same—there is no change. I still catch cold and am pestered with

rheumatism, and as a consequence my work lags and drags and mostly stands still. Livy has colds, but she keeps up her studies and other activities with spirit. The children have French colds which can't be told from German ones by people ignorant of the language. Rosa has a horrible cold — Clara Spaulding has the twin to it. She studies and has got into the new language so deeply now that the French can't understand her French and we can't understand her English. But she and Livy will get over this transition stage presently.

This from Hartford at Christmas time 1888 illustrating mildly Mr. Clemens' love of imparting a shock:

Thank you ever so much for my end of that check; I shall buy me something nice and warm with it—whiskey or something like that.

And this in a later Hartford letter, an instance of his love of assuming a saintly air:

Livy has been grieving because the chops were burned and the Robinsons' breakfast spoiled thereby; but I told her it would make them the better satisfied with their own home. Such things are providential; they are sent for a good and wise purpose.

It was this assumption of extreme goodness that caused one of his life-time intimates to dub and always call him: "The Holy Samuel," to which he responded by adopting for her the equally applicable and lasting appellation: "Sinful Susan."

Three more letters to his mother-in-law. This from York, England:

For the present we shall remain in this queer old walled town with its crooked, narrow

lanes that tell us of their old day that knew no wheeled vehicles; its plaster and timber dwellings with upper stories far overhanging the street and thus marking their date, say 300 years ago; the stately city walls, the castellated gates, the ivy-grown, foliage-sheltered, most noble and picturesque ruin of St. Mary's Abbey, suggesting their date, say 500 years ago, in the heart of crusading times and the glory of English chivalry and romance; the vast cathedral of York with its worn carvings and quaintly pictured windows preaching of still remoter days; the outlandish names of streets and courts and byways that stand as a record and a memorial, all these centuries, of Danish dominion here in still earlier times; the hint here and there of King Arthur and his knights and their bloody fights with Saxon oppressors round about this old city more than 1300 years gone by; and last of all, the melancholy old stone coffins and sculptured inscriptions, a venerable arch and a hoary tower of stone that still remain and are kissed by the sun and caressed by the shadows every day, just as the sun and the shadows have kissed and caressed them every lagging day since the Roman Emperor's soldiers placed them there in the times when Jesus, the Son of Mary, walked the streets of Nazareth, a youth with no more name or fame than this Yorkshire boy, that is loitering down the street this moment.

These two set forth unpleasant conditions endured in Munich by the family in the diligent pursuit of the German language:

Our bedroom window looked upon a court; all sorts of occupations were carried on under it. At 5:00 a.m. they sawed wood and split it there; at 6:00 a professional carpet beater began to

add his whackings; at 7:00 some boiler-makers reinforced the carpet beater—now think of all those noises going at once! The very first night, as I was dropping to sleep, I discovered that my pet detestation was in the house—a cuckoo clock. – – – Clara Spaulding’s bed has tumbled down twice. Her window shade has to be put up with a step ladder, and gotten down in the same way. To our morning noises was soon added (in the hall) the barking of a Spitz dog at 7:30. The fact is, there was but one thing we took solid and healing comfort in, and that was our gentle young colored girl who waits on our table. But, alas, day before yesterday she fell in the cistern and the color all came off.

We require her to fall in every day now. We have clean table linen, now. Clara’s bed and window shade are to be fixed today. I shall invite the Spitz to supper this evening and tomorrow he will know more about the Sweet By and By than he does now.

So we are all right, Mother dear. We are contented, and pretty happy. We think the world of the Fraulein and would not be willing to live elsewhere in Munich than under her motherly wing. But it would do my very soul good to have Charley and Theodore here a month and keep a record of their comments.

With the love of us all to you and all in the homestead,

Your now middle-aged son,
SAML.

Well, Mother dear, things go on just as usual, so there is nothing important to report. I have written 900 pages of manuscript on my book, therefore it is half done; Livy and Clara Spaulding have learned half of the German lan-

guage together, so they are half done; the children have learned how to speak German, drink beer and break the Sabbath like the natives, so they are half done. We are all a half-way lot, like the rest of the world; but we are progressing toward the great goal, Completion, Perfection,—which has also another name, the Unattainable. We have been here nine weeks, and according to Livy's plans we remain nine weeks longer; if it were a perfectly reputable place as to health I would like to stay here six months longer, for it is very pleasant—even the dirt now that we are used to it and don't mind seeing it caked around. It is the greatest country for Art and dirt in the world; they have all kinds of Art and all kinds of dirt; there is more dirt than Art, of course, because the dirt has had the longer start and more people have devoted themselves to learning how to make it and make it right; but Art is coming. Art is progressing here all the time; this very year there is to be a prodigious international Art Exhibition here which will astonish the world—and if they will follow it up with a dirt exhibition their fortune is made.

This outburst in a letter to one with whom Mr. Clemens had “tramped abroad”:

O, Switzerland! the further it recedes into the enriching haze of time, the more intolerably delicious the charm of it and the cheer of it and the glory and majesty and solemnity and pathos of it grow. Those mountains had a soul; they thought; they spoke. And what a voice it was;—and how real. Deep down in my memory it is sounding yet. Alp calleth unto Alp!—that stately old scriptural wording is the right one for God's Alps and God's ocean. How puny we were in that awful presence, and how painless

it was to be so; how fitting and right it seemed, and how stingless was the sense of our unspeakable insignificance. And Lord, how pervading were the repose and peace and blessedness that poured out of the heart of the invisible Great Spirit of the mountains.

Now what is it? There are mountains and mountains and mountains in this world—but only these take you by the heart strings. I wonder what the secret of it is. Well, time and time and again it has seemed to me that I must drop everything and flee to Switzerland once more. It is a longing—a deep, strong, tugging longing—that is the word. We must go again, Joe.

.....

One thing people have realized truly is that Mr. Clemens was not a business genius. Fortunately most of his intimates had his interests at heart, and saved him much loss, though by no means all. At one time Mr. Clemens was a partner in the family business in Elmira and he wrote to my father asking for a statement of his personal account with the firm. Such a statement was drawn off and mailed to him, showing a good sized balance in his favor. Back came the paper with a letter saying: “Put the statement away in the safe, Charlie, and the next time I go to Elmira we’ll get it out and go over it and find out whether I owe the firm or the firm owes me.” And yet:

“The month of May is one of the most dangerous months in which to speculate in stocks. The others are: October, July, January, September, April, November, August, December, March, February, and June.”

Two of Mr. Clemens’ business ventures ruined him for the time being at least. One was a type-setting machine, which might have succeeded but for the appearance on the scene of a simpler and less costly rival, the fore-runner of those in use today. The other was a venture into the publishing business. It is interesting that Mr. Clemens got General U. S. Grant to entrust the publication of his memoirs to him and that that particular venture was a great success. Mr. Clemens was able to put

a check for a very large sum in the General's hands as the first returns not very long before the old fighter's death. The story of the lecturing trip round the world to pay debts, which were not personal, a hard but successful trip, is too well known to need telling.

I have gathered a few unrelated notes which may show some unfamiliar sides of the man.

One of us asked him what he, always for the underdog, really thought of Socialism. "I can't believe in it—I can't even hope for it—I know too much about human nature," he replied.

Turning to his companion at a performance of "Romeo and Juliet," on one of his last visits to the theatre, he remarked: "That's one of the greatest things Bacon ever wrote." His belief that Bacon wrote Shakespeare was absolute, and the more interesting because he so loved and so knew Shakespeare.

The world has always heard so much of Mark Twain as a story teller, the center of any group, that it is of interest to know that he was a wonderful listener. I used to think he was encouraging us children when we had anything to say, by feigned interest to draw us out and give us practice. That was probably true, but it was also real interest he had. A story of self-sacrifice, of injustice, or of something amusing would instantly kindle a response; he would flush, pace the floor in excitement, very likely with tears in his eyes, or laugh as joyfully as his own audience might. Any such tale he would want over and over again, just as what he loved in books he would read over and over again.

Mr. Clemens' patriotism was very great; his idea of national morality was as high as that of personal. My father and I visited him and his family in Vienna in the early Spring of 1898 when the war with Spain was rushing upon us. Austria, cousin to Spain, was very hostile to America and Americans. The Austrian acquaintances of the Clemens family in Vienna did not seem willing to give them up, but failed not to tell these American friends in one way or another that their countrymen were "pigs," and their government a bully simply clamoring to grab Cuba for itself for ever and ever. The doubts thus aroused disturbed Mark Twain and, although we did not retain Cuba, he later went to white heat over America's position in the Spanish war. He said: "When the United States sent word to Spain that the Cuban atrocities must end, she occupied the highest moral position ever taken by a nation since the Almighty made the Earth. But when she snatched the Philippines and

butchered the boats of a poverty-struck, priest-ridden nation of children, she stained the flag. That's what we have to-day—a stained flag.”

To pass again to lighter matters: Mr. Clemens hated above all things to be interrupted. Of an acquaintance who always did interrupt he said: “What an admirable provision that Mrs. X was not present when the Deity said: ‘Let there be light!’ ”

When asked if the Kaiser had not been at the bottom of Germany's commercial growth, he replied: “Yes, yes, he's competent, the Kaiser is competent, and he knows he's competent. If he had occasion to refer to his Maker he would speak of Him as the junior member of the firm of which he, the Kaiser is senior partner.”

My friends have many of them enjoyed this teasing joke on me. My uncle and I went to take a row on Lake Saranac. Seating himself luxuriously among the cushions of the rear seat he lazily remarked: “Experts say there is no exercise so splendid as rowing, and there is nothing in this world I love to do as I love to row—but, (sadly) Jervis, I can't ride backwards.”

There is a true and very pretty story, of an older time, as to the effect on the audience of Hartford friends and neighbors and on Mr. Clemens himself of a turn in the first performance of “The Prince and the Pauper,” which the Clemens children gave to surprise their father. Susy as the Prince, the son of the irascible Henry the Eighth, in that first scene with the Pauper, the son of the brutal John Canty, was saying seriously: “Fathers be alike mayhap; mine hath not a doll's temper,” when someone, I rather think Mr. Charles Dudley Warner, gave an irrepressible giggle, and the whole audience went off into appreciative shouts of laughter. The scene was interrupted, the children were indignant, but Mr. Clemens was highly pleased that the possibility of just such a connection had never struck Mrs. Clemens, who had coached the cast.

Such theatricals proved to be a part of the Hartford life for several years, reaching their height when the children were older and we cousins paid them visits during school vacations, and the stars of the casts were Mr. Clemens and Mr. William Gillette, then a neighbor and friend.

One of the pleasantest neighborhood customs that grew up in the Hartford home was the gathering, of an evening, around the library fire while Mr. Clemens read aloud. He liked stirring poetry, which he read admirably, sometimes rousing his little audience to excitement and cheers. Shakespeare remained, by whichever name, the love of his heart,

but he made his own unique programs, and once mischievously slipped between two of the deathless sonnets a particularly charming reading of a little set of verses accidentally come into his hands, that had been painstakingly written for a school periodical by one of the children.

The listeners invariably demanded at the end three favorites, "How they brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix," "Up at a Villa, Down in the City," and, for climax, "The Battle of Naseby," which he delivered with supreme eloquence and emotion.

To us as little children Mr. Clemens as the uncle of the study at Quarry Farm (on the hills east of Elmira) was a source of wonder and joy. To be sure there were hours when the six children must keep away from the study, but there were other hours of wonderful games and stories. My uncle indulged in "making out," as we called it, stories from pictures that we would choose. We recall that the Vicar of Wakefield was the first favorite. Fancy the possibilities lying in scenes devised by sedate old Goldsmith and interpreted to small children by Mark Twain's fantasy.

One game we can remember only dimly, but it must have been a good one. Stakes driven at intervals at the sides of drives and paths represented Kings of England, and the spaces between, the length of their reigns. Needless to say the good scholar of history got the furthest along among the stakes. Improving the family's knowledge of history and books and languages was a very vital thing.

Speaking of history reminds me of a remark Mr. Clemens made concerning the celebrated historian Ferrero. It was at a time when all intellectual New York was living up at Columbia listening to Ferrero. "That," he commented scornfully, "is the greatest historian that ever lived — he has succeeded in making Julius Caesar uninteresting!"

Recollections of the older times included Mr. Clemens' love of music. While, with the musical education going on in his family, he later developed a taste for some of the great productions of all times, it was really the simple music of real worth that he loved. He had been brought up among southern darkies and he knew their folks songs before ragtime had commenced its blighting work, and would sit at the piano and in good voice and admirable imitation take us back to Dixie. His singing too of some old English songs I remember. Years later, in the Summer of 1897, a band of Jubilee Singers from one of the southern negro schools was touring Europe and making, by the way, a most favorable impression. They sought Mr. Clemens out and asked the privilege of coming to his little villa on the shores of Lake Lucerne to sing to him — just to

him. A unique afternoon of music followed, and in the audience at the later public concerts in Lucerne itself could regularly be seen the shaggy head of a patron of consequence.

Mr. Clemens was fond of some card games, though billiards were his chief delight. His comments while playing bezique made cards tolerable even to those who didn't like them. "We-e ll, I've detained this dark lady long enough. Never did like her - can't see what that King of Spades sees in her — but land! he can have her. Let 'em have a Royal Marriage and see where they come."

One might think Mr. Clemens' western mining life would have left a taste for gambling, but such games as he played were only for the fun in them and the skill to be developed. During one of his last winters spent in New York he played euchre considerably at the home of his friend, Mr. Henry H. Rogers. A small stake was involved, which, he told us, wasn't big enough to insure him his carfare home. "But," said he, "John Stanchfield is teaching me a brand new game and when I get proficient in it and have it mastered, I'm going to introduce it up there, and I'll have Rogers' clothes."

Among Mr. Clemens' friends in Elmira were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas K. Beecher; he, one of the famous Beecher preachers who made his life work the welfare of a large Congregational church in particular and a community in general; she, a uniquely versatile person, a descendant of Noah Webster. Among other qualities Mrs. Beecher possessed great positiveness, a positiveness such as to invite debate in anyone who felt at all confident of his ability to hold up the other side. One day while talking with Mr. Clemens Mrs. Beecher proclaimed her faith in immortality in her usual emphatic way and Mr. Clemens promptly took up the challenge and advanced a hopeless and cheerless philosophy. This Mrs. Beecher combated with great earnestness and finally rested her case by saying: "Now Mr. Clemens, if you meet me in heaven a million years from now, will you confess that you were wrong?" This was cordially assented to, but Mrs. Beecher wanted a contract drawn and executed to this effect. She produced three suitable stones and on this eternal substance Mr. Clemens inscribed the following:

CONTRACT
with
Mrs. T. K. Beecher
—

text says 3 stones, but we have pictures of 4
should we remove the labels?
i.e. 1st stone, etc.

FLAG

Elmira, July 2
1895.

I.

If you prove right and I prove wrong
A million years from now,
In language plain and frank and strong
My error I'll avow
To your dear mocking face.

II.

If I prove right, by God his grace,
Full sorry I shall be,
For in that solitude no trace
There'll be of you and me,
Nor of our vanished race.

III.

A million years, O patient stone,
You've waited for this message,
Deliver it a million hence!
(Survivor pays expressage.)
Mark Twain

questions on Australia?

FLAG

On a hot summer day in 1889 a young British journalist came to Elmira, on a long journey from Australia, to interview Mr. Clemens. Such an event was not unusual in itself, but this particular visit started a close and important friendship. My mother remembered afterward that she met Mr. Clemens as he returned from seeing the stranger on his way. She asked him if he had enjoyed the call. "That," he replied, "is a most unusual young man. He knows almost every thing that is worth knowing, and what he doesn't know, I know. We had a very good time." The name on the young man's card was Rudyard Kipling, a name a short time later to be on every one's lips. Mark Twain and Rudyard Kipling met a good many times afterwards and together received their Oxford honorary degrees in 1907. Mr. Kipling within a few months of his death, to a member of our family, described the ovation tendered Mark Twain at Oxford that day. He said it had never been equalled. To quote him:

“When Mark Twain advanced to receive the hood, even those dignified old Oxford dons stood up and yelled.”

In connection with the interest in England and in the 1935 Mark Twain Centennial Mr. Kipling said: “To my mind he was the largest man of his time, both in the direct outcome of his work, and, more important still, as an indirect force in an age of iron Philistinism. Later generations don’t know their debt, of course, and they would be quite surprised if they did.”

May I offer two more letters? The first again to his mother-in-law, is very personal, but it illustrates so well Mr. Clemens’ way of putting a world of heart into words and with it a touch of his own flavoring humor that I cannot refrain from making use of it:

Hartford, Xmas 1880.

Mother dear; your several children have united in this love offering to you of a gold box to put your spectacles in; and they accompany it with the affectionate hope that your youth is now about to be renewed, and that you will not need your spectacles any more, but will need a strong substantial box to keep them in—permanently. Such is the idea of this spectacle box, and such its intent and purpose. So we offer it as a token of a love that would not only renew your impaired sight, but would rejuvenate you wholly if its power corresponded to its fervency. In the name of us all—health and blessings abide with our mother!

Your son,
SAML.

The other letter is one to my wife written at the time of her marriage:

York, Maine, September 27, '02.

DEAR LEE:

Now that you are about to enter upon a great and solemn responsibility, and one which

is new to you, perhaps a word from one who is experienced may be of service to you.

To begin, then: the first requisite to happiness in the married state is obedience. Where obedience is wanting, failure is certain; where obedience is wanting, trouble is sure to follow; where obedience is wanting, it were better, a hundred times better, that the marriage had never been.

The best way, the wisest way, the only safe and right way, is to exact it at the very start,— then it will soon come easy to him. But if you fool around — but don't do that, don't do it. Your Aunt Livy did that, for a long time, hoping against hope, but at the end of the week she realized her mistake, and ever since then, happiness has reigned.

He will want to rebel, but if you start right he will not want to a second time. This is experience which is speaking to you; this is not from an amateur, this is from one who knows.

Enter into our tribe and enrich it with the graces of your youth and of your heart; be you welcome, and let us love you.

Your uncle SAM.

I should like to conclude with parts of three short and rather unknown Mark Twain manuscripts. The first goes back to about 1870 and is entitled: "Comments on English Diction."

I have here jotted down some ideas suggested by one of the most useful books I have ever seen — *Modern English Literature: Its Blemishes and Defects* — by Henry H. Breen, F.S.A. One does not see the ugly knots and excrescences upon a human hair until he puts it under the microscope; one is sleepily unconscious of the blemishes that disfigure our best literature un-

til he inspects a page of it through Mr. Breen's disenchanting magnifier.

... One of the commonest faults we develop when we begin to write, is that of redundancy. I think it is the worst in the list of faults, too. Ungrammatical simplicity is more endurable. I think we hardly realize how prone we are to use too many words; words, too, that are larger than necessary. I have seen a newspaper report of a fire, in which the writer said: "The devouring element gathered to its fatal embrace the devoted edifice, and, high above the destruction, the desolation, the devastation which ensued, waved its crimson banners as if in infernal triumph over the ruin it had wrought." There have been fires that could justify such lavish language and such grandiloquent metaphors, but they were in Sheol. This was a one-story frame house up a back street in a village. What that man needed to say, was, "The cottage took fire and burned down." That would have been sufficient.

I open Sir Walter Scott's *Guy Mannering* at a venture, and find this sentence: "This proposal seemed to dispose most of the assembly instantly to evacuate the premises." Why not have said, "These words moved most of the company to go at once"? No high-flown language, no triple syllables are required in such case. Cases will come when such are required: then, if you have been dealing in them all along, they come without force, and fall dead upon the ear. There is majesty, there is sublimity, in thunder. That is because God thunders at intervals only. Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Dickens were distressingly given to using too many words. You will find the same fault in nearly any sermon, lecture, book or newspaper. If you wish to see how forcible short words and an unostentatious dic-

tion are, glance into the Scriptures. There you find such expressions as "Like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land"; "Deep calleth unto deep"; "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"; "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

Sir Walter could not have said these things in anything short of four chapters.

One should suit his language to his theme; and not be always riding the high horse like Sir Walter. One should mount the high horse at the proper time and only then. Then he will be fresh, not jaded. One should discourse gently of violets and zephyrs, and save his long syllables and sounding phrases for battle hymns, the destruction of cities, the fall of empires.

Let us take two examples, each perfect in its way — Mr. Lincoln's Gettysburg speech, and a few lines from Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Mr. Lincoln's words are simple, tender, beautiful, elevated; they flow as smoothly as a poem. This is probably the finest prose passage that exists in the English language:

"Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

"Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on

a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

“But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion, that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

Now we take Shakespeare. The style is totally different. It is sublime and tremendous — it is in keeping with the grandeur of his subject — for he is speaking of the destruction of the world. There are but six lines — but *such* lines!

“And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp’d towers, the gorgeous palaces,

The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind."

The same thing may be said of the Gettysburg speech and the little passage I have just read — namely: no man can add a word or take away a word — they stand absolutely perfect.

The second is a poem, one of the very few attempts Mr. Clemens ever made at verse. I remember the day the manuscript was rediscovered. During the last visit of Mr. and Mrs. Clemens to Quarry Farm, I chanced to walk in there one afternoon when this old forgotten manuscript had quite suddenly turned up. My aunt asked my uncle to read it to me, and a vivid picture remains of the man walking the floor with his swinging, crouching step, one hand holding the paper, the other gesturing, or rumpling up his mass of wavy white hair. Would that I could reproduce the entire scene. Here are some of the stanzas:

THE DERELICT

Almshouse Attendant. "Consider, Sir: in a time long past, the fame of his great services filled the world; now he lies dying here friendless, forlorn and forgotten, and mutters his reproaches with unconscious lips":

You sneer, you ships that pass me by,
Your snow-pure canvass towering proud:
You traders base:—why, once such fry
Paid reverence, when like a cloud
Storm-swept I drove along,
My Admiral at post, his pennon blue
Faint in the wilderness of sky, my long
Yards bristling with my gallant crew,
My ports flung wide, my guns displayed,
My tall spars hid in bellying sail!
— You struck your topsails then, and made
Obeisance — now your manners fail.

Well, go your way, and let me dream
 Of days long past, when I, like you,
 Was strong and young, and life did seem
 Made all for joy; when, I, like you,
 Did skim the sea all bravely clad,
 And whether skies in splendor shone,
 Or palled the world in gloom, was glad:
 O golden days, where are ye flown!

For thirty years I served the wars,
 And trod the deep in sinful pride
 Begot of my brave battle-scars,
 And cherished stains where heroes died.
 Remotest oceans knew my fame,
 Remotest lands paid court to me
 With thundering guns and spouting flame
 And welcoming hosts on bended knee.
 For thirty years. Then came a day
 When all my pride full low was laid,
 And all my honor men did slay
 As 'twere a worthless thing. They said
 "This ship is old, and fails apace;
 "Her form is warp'd, her spars astrain,
 "Her sails but rags — it were disgrace
 "To let her bear the flag again."

The ingrates sold me; and I sank
 From that high service of the State
 To sordid commerce; taking rank
 With your sort; bearing freight
 Of hams and soap and corn and hay,
 And manned by sloven longshore clods
 Profaning decks where once held sway
 The Nelson breed of warrior gods.

Some while I wistful watched to see
 If my wide world had me forgot;
 If fleets would dip their flags to me,
 And fortresses salute. O lot

Full hard to bear was mine! No soul
 Remembered me! No topsail strikes,
No color dips! My humble role
 Now 'twas, to dip to these, and strike my kites!

Well, thirty years I wrought in trade,
 And always shabbier I grew;
And then once more I fell a grade,
 And carried swine — as freight and crew.
Full forty years I bore this cross
 And led this life of nameless shame,
Then foundered in a happy gale,
 And derelict became.

The last is a Fourth of July speech delivered to American and English students at Heidelberg in '91. It will particularly interest those who have struggled with the German language:

July 4, '91.

Since I arrived, a month ago, in this old wonderland, this vast garden of Germany, my English tongue has so often proved a piece of useless baggage to me, and so troublesome to carry around, in a country where they haven't the checking system for luggage, that I finally set to work, last week, and learned the German language. Es freut mich das dies so ist, den es muss, in ein hauptsächlich degree, höflich sein, dass man, auf ein occasion like this, sein Rede in die Sprache des Landes worin he boards, ausprechen soll. Dafür habe ich, aus reinische Vergangenheit, — no, Verlegenheit, — no, I mean Höflichkeit, aus reinische Höflichkeit resolved to tackle this business in the German language, um Gottes willen. Sie müssen so freundlich sein und verzeih mich die interlarding von ein oder zwei Englisher worte, hie und da, denn ich finde das die Deutsche is not a

very copious language, and so when you've really got anything to say, you've got to draw on a language that can stand the strain. Wenn aber, man kann nicht meinem Rede verstehen, so werde ich ihm später dasselbe übersetz, wenn er solche Dienst verlangen wollen haben werden sein soll. (I don't know what wollen haben werden sein soll means but I notice that they always put it at the end of a German sentence — just for general literary gorgeousness, I suppose.)

Die Anblick so viele Engländer und Amerikaner hier zusammen begleitet, in Bruderliche concord, ein grossen Tag zu feiern, whose high benefits were not for one land or one locality alone, but have conferred a measure of good upon all lands that know freedom today and love it, ist eine Anblick die ist gut zu sehen—gut für die Augen — eminently eine Anblick solche als in die gemeinsame Heidelberger phrase neunt man ein "Schönes Aussicht."

Ja, freilich natürlich wahrscheinlich ebensowohl Gott im Himmel! die Aussicht auf dem Königstuhl mehr grösserer ist, aber, geistliche sprechend, nicht so schön, lob' Gott! Hundert Jahre vorüber waren die Engländer und die Amerikaner Feinde, aber heute sind sie herzliche Kameraden, Gott sei Dank; May this good-fellowship endure; may these two banners, here blended in amity, so remain; may they never any more wave over opposing hosts, or be stained with blood which was kindred, is kindred and always will be kindred — until a line drawn upon a map shall have power to say, "This bars the ancestral blood from flowing in the veins of the descendant!"

Nun, meinem Freunde, no, meinen Freunde, — no, Meines Freundes — well, take your choice, they're all the same price. I don't know

which is right. Nun, ich habe gehabt haben worden gewesen sein — as Goethe says in his *Life on the Ocean Wave* — ich glaube das—das—but never mind, it wasn't anything important, and I will desist. It is a great and justly honored day, — a day worthy of the veneration in which it is held by the true patriots of all climes and nationalities—a day which offers a fruitful theme for thought and speech, and I might go on, with success, perhaps, and yet I might chance to run out of intellectual funds and have to get off at a way station before I got through; and therefore, thanking you for the honor of your invitation and the kindness with which I have been received, I will take timely warning by the fate of that Western orator who was asked to celebrate the opening of a new bridge with a speech. He was a diffident man, with an impediment in his mind. He said, "Fellow Citizens, the timber of this bridge was once part of the old primeval forest! — and — a — and — a — the — a, — I repeat, fellow citizens, the timber of this bridge was once a part of the old primeval forest! — and — a — the — a, — er — a, — fellow citizens, as I said before, the timber of this bridge was once a part of the old primeval forest!—and—a—and—a—I wish to God it was a part of the old primeval forest yet!"

In presenting to you these more or less intimate tales of Mark Twain I would explain that no claim is made for them other than that they represent the every-day side of the man. The best, the cleverest, and the most amusing things he said and did have largely gone to the public. My attempt in writing down these odds and ends was to depict a little of what transpired in the closer contact of family life.

Appendix C

Mark Twain and Elmira

by Jervis Langdon

In what sense was Elmira the home of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as Mark Twain? A sketch of his connections with this city will perhaps be a welcome answer to this question for many who live here.

Mr. Clemens paid his first visit to Elmira in the summer of 1868, as the guest of the Langdon family who lived then in what remains today the family homestead on the corner of Church and Main Streets. The young writer and lecturer, thirty-two years old, and just coming into the popularity which was to give place to fame, had met the previous year a considerably younger man, Charles J. Langdon, of Elmira, a fellow-voyager on the cruise to Egypt and the Holy Land, which later was made famous in Mark Twain's book, *Innocents Abroad*. A friendship between these two resulted in Mr. Clemens being invited to visit the Langdons in Elmira, and a more momentous result was that he very promptly fell in love with Olivia, the younger of his friend's two sisters. In time his devotion was reciprocated, and the deep and lasting romance of Mark Twain's life was thus begun in Elmira. The engagement was announced in February, 1869.

On February 2nd, 1870, the wedding of Olivia Langdon and Samuel Clemens took place in the Langdon home, one of the two officiating ministers being Thomas K. Beecher, of The Park Church, whose statue stands in Wisner Park.

Mr. and Mrs. Clemens lived for a year and a half in Buffalo and then moved to Hartford, Connecticut, where they soon built a house which remained their home for years. During these years, particularly in the seventies and eighties, they and their children spent many summers at Quarry Farm, overlooking Elmira, the home of Mrs. Clemens' older sister, Susan Langdon Crane and her husband Theodore W. Crane. Three of Mr. and Mrs. Clemens' four children were born in Elmira.

The little farm house, and its seven acres, originally bought by the father, Jervis Langdon, as a place for rest and recreation, was given to Mrs. Crane, who eventually made it into a comfortable year-round home and added many surrounding acres. Mrs. Crane's husband died in 1889, but Quarry Farm remained her property and her home until her death in 1924, when it passed to her nephew, Jervis Langdon.

In preparation for one of the earliest of these summer visits of the Clemens family to Quarry Farm, Mrs. Crane in 1874 had built, as a surprise for Mr. Clemens, the little "Study" which still remains on the higher ground, a hundred yards or so from the house. [The Study was moved to the Elmira College campus in 1952.] Mark Twain took possession of this work shop with the greatest pleasure. Of it he wrote:

It is the loveliest study you ever saw. It is octagonal, with a peaked roof, each face filled with a spacious window, and it sits perched in complete isolation on the very top of an elevation that commands leagues of valley and city and retreating ranges of distant blue hills. It is a cozy nest and just room in it for a sofa, table and three or four chairs, and when the storms sweep down the remote valley and the lightning flashes behind the hills beyond, and the rain beats upon the roof over my head, imagine the luxury of it.

That summer the greater part of *Tom Sawyer* was written in the study and parts or all of some of Mark Twain's best known books originated there in following seasons. It was Mr. Clemens' habit to repair to the study in the morning and work without stopping for lunch until late afternoon. As sheet followed sheet of manuscript it was dropped quickly out of the way to the floor, and the day's harvest was collected when work ceased and taken down to the house to be read and discussed with the rest of the family during the long evenings.

In the summer of 1889 there came to Elmira from Australia to interview Mr. Clemens, a young man as yet unknown to the literary world. The card he presented at the Langdon home, where he found Mark Twain after a hot, dusty drive to Quarry Farm in a livery "hack," bore the name, Rudyard Kipling. A few months later this name was to

become known to the world for all time. Friendship and mutual admiration sprang up that day between these men which were to grow very deep as the years went by. They received together their greatest literary honors, the Oxford degrees, in 1907.

Mr. Clemens was a familiar figure on the streets of this city. On warm summer days he was usually clad in a white linen suit and he was among the first to adopt the Panama straw hat. He had many acquaintances and some strong personal friends among Elmira's. This came about in part from his lifelong fondness for the game of billiards. Here as elsewhere he sought out the better billiard players, being himself a pretty good performer, and the recreation he cared most for brought him fairly often into the valley for games with Thomas K. Beecher and other well known Elmira's of that day. The games took place either at the Langdon home or the Century Club, then located in the Masonic Temple on Lake Street. Jacob B. Coykendall, who still lives in Elmira, but then scarcely more than a boy, was one of Mr. Clemens' billiard companions. He has many interesting anecdotes to tell.

One summer there was delivered to Mr. Clemens here a full nickel-plated bicycle of the old "high wheel" type, but he could not make much use of it because of the difficulty of getting it up and down the hill. Mark Twain, however, often walked the two and a half miles from Quarry Farm to the center of the city, and thought nothing of the long climb involved in the reverse trip. Those were the pre-motor days. The horses that toiled up the mile-long hill needed watering. Mr. and Mrs. Clemens saw the need and placed four stone troughs at places on the roads near Quarry Farm where there were springs to feed them, and named one after each of their four children: Langdon, who died in infancy, Olivia Susan, Clara and Jean. These troughs remain to-day, on the roads near Quarry Farm. [Clara's trough rests near the Mark Twain Study on the Elmira College campus. The other three line the roadside at Quarry Farm.]

In the nineties visits to Elmira became less frequent for the Clemens family. The last real sojourn at Quarry Farm involving work at the study was in 1903. Mr. Clemens was here on a sad errand in 1904. His wife had died in Italy, and the funeral services were held in her Elmira home where her marriage had taken place thirty-four years before.

Mark Twain's last visit to Elmira was in April, 1907. His home was then at Redding, Connecticut, where he had built a comfortable and charming house in the beautiful rolling country of that region. It was at this home, which he called "Stormfield," that his death occurred

April 21, 1910. Funeral services, conducted jointly by Mark Twain's close friend, the Rev. Joseph H. Twitchell [sic.] of Hartford, Connecticut, and Henry VanDyke of Princeton, were held in the Brick Church, Fifth Avenue, New York, and a day later, April 24th, services also took place in Elmira at the Langdon home. These were conducted by the late Rev. Samuel E. Eastman of The Park Church. The day was dark with heavy spring rains. Mark Twain was buried beside his wife and three children in Woodlawn Cemetery, Elmira.

The following volumes were written in whole or in part in Elmira:

1871 - (Before the Study was built) Greater portion of
Roughing It

At Study, 1874 - First half of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

1874 - The play, *Colonel Mulberry Sellers*

1876, 1880, 1883 - *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

1877 - 1880 - *The Prince and the Pauper*

1879 - *A Tramp Abroad* (many chapters)

1882 - *Life on the Mississippi* (the river revisited)

1888 - Greater portion of *A Yankee at King Arthur's Court*

1903 - *A Dog's Tale*

NOTE—Many more details of Mark Twain's life in Elmira can be found in *Mark Twain, A Biography* by Albert Bigelow Paine. Publishers: Harper & Bros., New York City.

Appendix D

Langdon Family



Jervis Langdon (1875-1952).



Eleanor Sayles Langdon (1878-1971).
(Mrs. Jervis Langdon)



Charles Jervis Langdon (1849-1916).



Ida Clark Langdon (1849-1934).
(Mrs. Charles Langdon)

LANGDON FAMILY

FIRST
GENERATION

ANDREW LANGDON
4/30/1774 - 8/28/1811

*SUNICE KING
3/11/1782 - 1/14/1833
M(1) JONATHAN WILLIAMS
M(2) JONATHAN FORD

SECOND
GENERATION

JOHN LANGDON
12/15/1804 - 11/20/1861

*JERVIS LANGDON -
19/1808 - 8/9/1870

*OLIVIA LEWIS
8/19/1810 - 11/28/1890

THIRD
GENERATION

*SUSAN LANGDON -
218/1836 - 8/28/1924

*THEODORE CRANE
8/26/1831 - 7/3/1889

*OLIVIA LOUISE LANGDON -
12/27/1845 - 6/5/1894

*SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS
11/30/1835 - 4/21/1910

FOURTH
GENERATION

*LANGDON CLEMENS
11/7/1870 - 6/2/1872

*OLIVIA SUSAN CLEMENS
3/18/1872 - 8/18/1896
"SUST"

*CLARA LANGDON CLEMENS
4/8/1874 - 11/18/1962

*JANE LAMPTON CLEMENS
7/24/1880 - 12/24/1909
"JEAN"

M(1) *OSSEF GABRILOWITSCH
28/1878 - 9/14/1926

M(2) *JACQUES SAMOSSOUD
98/1894 - 6/13/1966

FIFTH
GENERATION

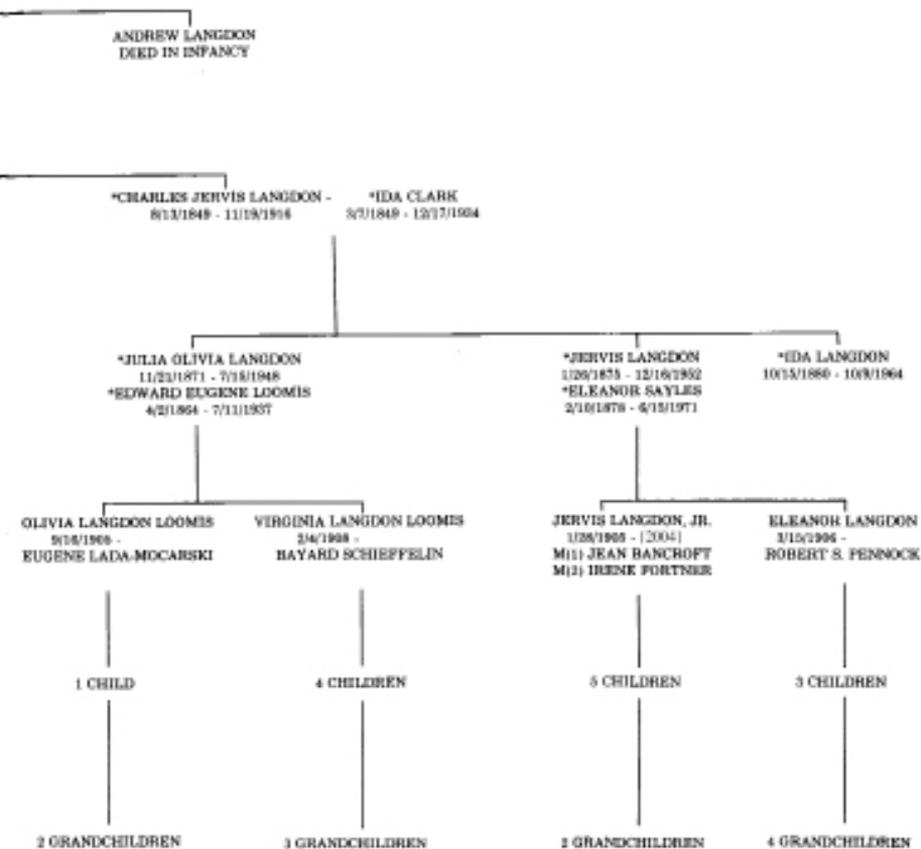
*NINA GABRILOWITSCH
8/18/1910 - 1/16/1966

SIXTH
GENERATION

SEVENTH
GENERATION

*BURIED IN LANGDON - CLEMENS PLOT, WOODLAWN CEMETERY

IN ELMIRA



Chapter Ten

Quarry Farm

A Country Residence

Quarry Farm, the beloved home and acreage located on East Hill in Elmira, New York, enriched the families who lived or visited there. The pieces in this chapter reveal aspects of life at Quarry Farm—how the Clemenses traveled to Elmira from their residence in Hartford, Connecticut; how the home was remodeled in 1925; and finally, how the aesthetic doctrine of the Picturesque influenced the development of the house and grounds during the nineteenth century.

How Mark Twain Traveled Between Hartford and Elmira

by Jervis Langdon, Jr.

Jervis Langdon, Jr., great grandson of Mark Twain's father-in-law, was asked by Darryl Baskin, Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Quarry Farm, the question, "How did Mark Twain and his family get from Hartford to Elmira?" Mr. Langdon, who worked as a railroad man from the time he graduated from college and became president of several important railroads, agreed to find out. "If I can do anything," he said with a chuckle, "I can read a railroad timetable." The results of his research were published first in Dear Friends, a Newsletter of the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies at Quarry Farm, and is reprinted here with the permission of the Center and of Mr. Langdon.

Almost every summer during the period 1872 through the 1880s, Mark Twain and his family made a round-trip between Hartford and Elmira. How did they do it? The trip had to be by rail. There was no other available modes of transportation—no air service of course; no au-

tomobiles; and the only water service was limited to one segment of the through trip, New Haven to New York via Long Island Sound. For the first trips there were three railroads involved—the New Haven, Hartford, and Springfield; the New Haven and New York; and the Erie between New York and Elmira. In 1873 the two New Haven railroads merged, and there was relatively fast through service from Hartford to New York. Until 1882 the Erie was the only east-west carrier serving Elmira, but in that year the Lackawanna made its debut in New York to Elmira service and in 1883, it went to Buffalo as the short and faster line. The Erie, starting in 1833 had been constructed with 60 inch gauge, and it cost that company a fortune (\$75,000,000) to correct the error and run its trains on standard gauge.

In the early 1870s Mark Twain and his family could leave Hartford at 1 p.m. and with through service via New Haven arrive at New York at 5.05 p.m. The terminal, at first, was at Madison Square (27th Street), and the steam trains would travel over the tracks of the New York and Harlem R. Co., later New York Central, on the surface of what is now Park Avenue. Access to Grand Central Terminal on 42nd Street was gained in 1874.

For the Clemenses, once in New York, there followed a night in a hotel (probably on lower Fifth Avenue), or possibly with friends, or family. The option was an over-night trip on the Erie arriving in Elmira at 4:59 in the morning. The more sensible option, after a night in New York, was to leave on the Erie ferry from Chambers Street to Jersey City at 7.30 a.m. for the 10-hour rail trip to Elmira (arrival 5.56 p.m.). Erie tracks, after crossing the Chemung River on a bridge, were on the surface of Railroad Avenue with the passenger station at the same place as nowadays. On the trip, food was available from vendors with baskets of fruit and other edibles.

In 1882 the Lackawanna arrived in Elmira and brought a capacity for a much shorter trip from New York. Its tracks were extended to Buffalo the following year. After that year the Clemenses could leave either 23rd St. or Barclay Street on Manhattan for Hoboken by ferry and catch the Lackawanna's best westbound train, No.3, leaving at 10 a.m. with arrival at Elmira at 4.38 p.m.—a trip of 6-3/4 hours compared with the Erie's 10 hours. In *The Chemung Historical Journal* for June 1987, p. 3684, there is a note in Tom Byrne's "100 Years Ago" taken from the *Advertiser* of 1887:

*“June 25—Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain)
and family reached Elmira on DL& W Train No.3,
Thursday evening.”*

On a trip to Elmira prior to his wedding in 1870, Mark Twain traveling alone sent the following telegram to Charles J. Langdon:

*“Train stops every fifteen minutes and stays three
quarters of an hour, figure out when it will arrive
and meet me.”*

On that occasion in 1869 Mark Twain must have been traveling on the Erie. Leaving New York at 10 a.m. its mail train was scheduled for 39 station stops before arriving in Elmira at 11.45 p.m. Heat was provided at each end of the passenger coach by coal stoves; and lighting came from sperm [oil] candles.

For the return trip to Hartford prior to 1892, the Clemens had to use the Erie as the only choice. Its schedule called for an Elmira departure at 10.37 a.m. with arrival at New York (Chambers Street) at 9.25 p.m.—an eleven hour trip with 17 station stops. But in 1882 and thereafter the superior Lackawanna service was available with an Elmira departure on its fastest train, No. 6, at 12.49 p.m. and arrival at Hoboken at 8 p.m.—at least 3 1/2 hours shorter than the Erie train. After a night in New York, the New Haven service to Hartford was frequent and fast, with departures at 9 a.m., 12 noon, and 4 p.m. and arrivals at Hartford approximately 3 hours later. On some of these later New Haven trains parlor car service was available at a small extra charge.

The passenger fare structure generally applicable during this period was based on 2-1/2 cents per passenger mile. This produced a total one-way fare between Elmira and Hartford of less than \$10. with the addition of perhaps \$1.50 if the Clemens chose to ride in the parlor car on the New Haven segment of the trip.

Renovations at Quarry Farm

From the Unpublished Diary of Jervis Langdon (1875-1952)

Irene Fortner Langdon, together with her husband, Jervis Langdon Junior, gifted Quarry Farm to Elmira College in December 1982. In August 2004, Mrs. Langdon transcribed entries pertinent to the remodeling of the house at Quarry Farm from the Diary of her father-in-law.

Thursday, August 18, 1921

To the Farm with Ida and Dr. Arthur Booth who thinks Aunt Sue will be all right. She is much better. Talked electric lights with her.

Friday, August 19, 1921

To Farm in evening with Mother, Ida and Tante. Found Aunt Sue doing well and very happy over prospects of electric lights.

Sunday, September 18, 1921

Mother, Julie and I to Farm in afternoon where wiring is going well. Visited the rejuvenated “Ellersley”. New picnic plan to take the place of Study which hereafter will be closed to picnics.

Wednesday, October 5, 1921

Fine weather. Mother, Lee, Ida and I at Farm at dusk to see Aunt Sue’s electric lights turned on for the first time.

Friday, October 14, 1921

Rotary—did not stay throughout but went instead to first picnic at “Ellersley”—Aunt Sue, Mother, Lee, Ida and I. It was delightful.

Wednesday, October 26, 1921

Mother, Ida and I dined with Aunt Sue. Her house completely ablaze for the first time with electric lights.

Jan 25, 1925

To Quarry Farm and met Mr. Skiller who will start decorating very soon.

Feb 11, 1925

We got to Farm in PM. Mr. Skiller & "Willie" there and have done good work on front room—walls washed and one coat of paint—ceiling rubbed and cleaned.

Feb 12, 1925

Dining room mantle taken out and replaced with one from 311 Church Street. Wallpaper removed and walls to be painted white to show off mahagony [sic] furniture.

Feb 15, 1925

Two Setter pups to Farm. Jervis, Jr. named them "Prince" and "Pauper".

Feb 19, 1925

Mr. Keiser to Farm to develop new plans for other side of house.

Feb 21, 1925

Floor in living room half laid. First of dark stain on wood in dining room.

Feb 23, 1925

To Farm with Mr. Keiser—work going on particularly well in dining room.

Feb 25, 1925

Dining Room floor finished and must now be sanded.

March 5, 1925

Hole partly dug for foundations - old partition out of Library and bath tub from downstairs out on porch.

March 16, 1925

Dormer window placed in Jerv's room. Forms in place for concrete foundation and plumbing well along in guest bedroom.

March 25, 1925

Floor timber being laid for Library and Chimney started.

March 26, 1925

Fireplace rising and floor mostly down on Library addition. Lathing finished in Jerv's room and they are about ready for plastering those rooms – guest room and bath.

April 1, 1925

Carpenters erecting frame work outside.

April 7, 1925

10,000 pines and spruce came from State Conservation Committee.

April 11, 13, 14

Pines and spruces planted – helped by Scouts.

April 21, 1925

Brick walls rising on addition and windows cut in that wall. Tile laid in guest bathroom.

April 28, 1925

Brick wall finished and very handsome.

May 7, 1925

Putting up copper (green) shingles over Library windows.

May 12, 1925

Plaster board has been put on upstairs addition.

May 26, 1925

Front Porch being partly torn up and renewed.

June 6, 1925

Much has been done. “Pebble dash” all on new building. Mollie's sleeping porch coming along fine [I imagine this is the present sleeping porch. Mollie the housekeeper was living alone at Quarry Farm at the time and was afraid to sleep downstairs. – IFL]

June 9, 1925

Brick floor of courtyard half done.

June 25, 1925

Much work going on at Farm. Mason finishing steps in front of Library - floors upstairs nearly laid, tile going down in our bathrooms, etc.

June 28, 1925

Mason repairing chimney in woods. Tile layers finished bathroom and hearth ready for plastering in Library.

July 4, 1925

KU KLUX KLAN - Big Ku Klux Klan parade in late afternoon - very discouraging sight - ORGANIZED IGNORANCE!!

July 29, 1925

MOVING DAY TO QUARRY FARM.

Aug 2, 1925

First Sunday Morning at Quarry Farm. It was glorious!

Aug 15, 1925

The lovely black and gold mantle being set in Library

Oct 6, 1925

Moved up Library furniture, books, etc., from 311 Church Street and spent very busy evening settling the new room - got books into cases and went wearily to bed at midnight.

A Study of the "Picturesque"

by Lorraine Welling Lanmon

In 1989, the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies began to publish a series of occasional Quarry Farm Papers. Under the directorship of Darryl Baskin, the intent of the series was to make available contributions of first importance to Mark Twain Studies that might not have been otherwise available. Since 1989, nine papers have been published. The following essay, originally published as Quarry Farm Paper #3 (1991), explores the house and grounds at Quarry Farm. Its author, Dr. Lorraine Welling Lanmon, holds advanced de-

grees in *Interior Design and Art History* and has taught her subject matter at both Cornell University and Elmira College. A former Fellow in the Winterthur Program, she has also served as a consultant to the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York City. Dr. Lanmon is a contributor to the Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects and the author of *William Lescaze, Architect*, which received the Philadelphia Art Alliance Press Award. An earlier version of the author's Quarry Farm study received the Phillip Hooker Prize of the Turpin Bannister chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians. At the time of its publication as a Quarry Farm Paper, Dr. Lanmon was a member of the Center's Community Advisory Board and served as a consultant to the Center at Quarry Farm on matters of interior design and historic preservation.

Mark Twain's summer home at Quarry Farm, near Elmira, New York, and its original landscape design are virtually a textbook example of what Andrew Jackson Downing, the foremost American exponent of the philosophy of the picturesque in both architecture and landscape gardening, called the "*ferme ornée*—the embellished or picturesque farm."¹

The "*ferme ornée*," Downing wrote:

is a term generally applied to a farm, the whole or the greater part of which is rendered in some degree ornamental by intersecting it with drives, and private lanes, and walks, bordered by trees and shrubs, and by the neater arrangement and culture of the fields. It may also be applied to a farm with a tasteful farm house, and so much of the ground about it rendered ornamental as would naturally meet the eye of the stranger in approaching it for the first time.²

The "Picturesque" was among a variety of ideologies and aesthetic doctrines embraced by connoisseurs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The term was, and is now, used in a specialized way to denote one of the attitudes toward beauty proposed by English and American aesthetic philosophers, painters, architects, and landscape gardeners to express the romantic and poetic in nature.

In his 1794 *Essay on the Picturesque*, the English theoretician Uvedale Price categorized the qualities of the picturesque as an aesthetic distinct from the "Sublime" and the "Beautiful," earlier proposed by Ed-

mund Burke in his famous essay, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1756). Foremost among Price's characteristics were "variety and intricacy," "sudden and broken" lines and surfaces—spirited forms. That is, the picturesque was to express nature's "roughness, irregularity, and sudden variation."³ In essence it was to reflect a rural ambience.

In accordance with the doctrine of the picturesque, Mark Twain's summer home, Quarry Farm, is located on a sheltered site, high on a hill overlooking to the south a wide grassy slope, and, far below, the Chemung River valley, and to the west the city of Elmira and the forested hills of southern New York and northern Pennsylvania—an admirably romantic and scenic spot for a country residence.

In 1882, a *Louisville Courier Journal* reporter wrote:

The summer residence of Mr. Clemens is acknowledged to be here in the vicinity of Elmira, notwithstanding he has a house or two in other parts of the United States. His place is known as 'Quairy Farm' [sic], which is also the residence of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Theodore Crane, and is situated about two miles away from the business portion of the city, on an eminence known as 'East Hill.' The funny man's house is reached from the city by a winding road, which is steep, very steep, and at times is really a dangerous driveway. We go thither in a coupe, drawn by two horses, to whom the task of climbing seems not an unfamiliar one. Up and still up, and after an exciting dash up the hillside we see the house in the distance and handkerchiefs fluttering from the veranda. A few moments later I alight from the coupe, and am seated in a huge easy chair with the members of Mark Twain's family on every side.⁴

Although the Langdons, the Cranes, and the Clemenses have left the scene, the property has been well cared for by four generations of descendants of its original owner, Jervis Langdon, and since 1983 by Elmira College.

Quarry Farm became Jervis Langdon's summer retreat soon after his daughter Olivia was introduced to Samuel Clemens, now better known as Mark Twain. On an 1867 excursion to Europe, Africa, and Asia Minor, Olivia's younger brother Charles met fellow-voyager Mark Twain. On that trip, later made famous in Twain's *Innocents Abroad*, Charles showed Twain a miniature portrait of his sister. The story goes that Twain fell in love with that picture immediately. Soon after the travelers returned home, Mr. Langdon took Charles and Olivia to New York to hear Charles Dickens read from his own works. There Twain was reunited with his shipmate and introduced in person to Livy. This meeting resulted in Twain's being invited to visit the Langdons in Elmira.⁵

Although instantly enamored with Miss Langdon, Twain delayed his visit until the summer of 1868, owing to writing and lecturing obligations. After a long and intermittent courtship, the brash, agnostic, western journalist was married in 1870 to the gentle, refined, Christian, daughter of wealthy Jervis Langdon. For almost twenty years thereafter, the Clemens family spent its summers at Quarry Farm, where Samuel wrote many of his best known works and where two of their four children were born. They later spent only the summers of 1895 and 1903 there, in addition to a few short visits to Elmira thereafter.

Twain's letters reveal that the months spent near his wife's home town of Elmira were important to him both personally and professionally. Twain wrote about the farm with enthusiasm: we are "perched on a hill-top that overlooks a little world of green valleys, shining rivers, sumptuous forests, and billowy uplands veiling in the haze of distance." Twain continued: "We have no neighbors. It is the quietest of all quiet places, and we are hermits that eschew caves and live in the sun."⁶ Later, he wrote to his intimate friend the Reverend Joseph Twichell in Hartford: "You have never seen any place that was so divine as the farm. Why don't you come here and take a foretaste of heaven?"⁷ To his investment broker in Hartford, he said: "It is perfect paradise up here on the farm."⁸ And, to his friend and literary colleague William Dean Howells, he reported: "The farm is perfectly delightful this season. It is as quiet and peaceful as a South Sea Island. Some of the sunsets we have seen from this commanding eminence were marvelous."⁹

Clearly, summers in this informal country atmosphere inspired some of Twain's best writing. In May 1871, he wrote to his publisher Elisha Bliss, Jr.: "I am writing with a red-hot interest"; in 1883 he told Howells ... "I haven't piled up Ms so in years as I have done since we

came here to the farm three weeks and a half ago ... I wrote 4,000 words today and I touch 3,000 and upwards pretty often, and don't fall below 2,600 any working day."¹⁰ Twain exclaimed: "This summer it is no more trouble to me to write than it is to lie."¹¹

Indeed, major parts of *Roughing It* (1872), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *A Tramp Abroad* (1880), *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) as well as other books and sketches were written there. Twain explained: "The three summer months which I spend here are usually my working months. I am free here and can work uninterruptedly, but in Hartford I don't try to do any literary work. Yes, ... this may be called the home of *Huckleberry Finn* and other books of mine, for they were written here."¹²

Quarry Farm, located in New York State's "Southern Tier," was part of a 287-acre, 1788 land patent to Cornelius Roberts. Transferred from Roberts to merchant and land speculator Robert Covell in the early 19th century, 37 and one-half acres and 30 perches (the latter a little over 1/5 of an acre) were then deeded to farmer and mason John Henry Faustnaught at mid-century. This tract was purchased by Jervis Langdon, a successful entrepreneur in the lumber trade and in the mining and transportation of coal, on 14 May 1869 at a cost of \$3553.12.¹³

Both the purchase price and the 1853 map of Chemung County reveal that prior to Langdon's purchase there was a house on the site, which twentieth century written accounts refer to as a "plain little wooden house" and a "cottage-like structure."¹⁴

Just one year after acquiring the Faustnaught property, Jervis Langdon became ill and died three months later at the age of 61. Yet, he presumably had time to rebuild the old cottage into his country residence. For in 1870, Langdon willed to his daughter, Susan Langdon Crane, "the farm on East Hill upon which I have lately erected a dwelling house, conveyed to me by John H. Faustnaught and wife."¹⁵ Just what Langdon built there or how he might have remodeled the former cottage cannot be determined for certain. However, the inventory of the contents of the house and farm, made in August 1871, one year after Langdon's death, suggests that it was still a modest dwelling—a one-room-deep "hall-and-parlor" house. It contained simple furnishings for only a parlor, a hall, and one bedroom on the ground floor and the barest of essentials for one bedroom on the second floor—presumably adequate for

the summer and weekend retreat of Mr. and Mrs. Langdon, with perhaps one servant in attendance.”¹⁶

Whatever Langdon created there in 1869 was probably a wood-framed structure and doubtlessly consistent with the picturesque site. In terms made popular in America by Andrew Jackson Downing, and his collaborator, architect Andrew Jackson Davis, it was most likely an “ornamented cottage”—a small, economical little house in the suburbs of a town, often simply ornamented with stylistic details from the syntax of variously identified Medieval, Italianate, Swiss, or “Bracketed” prototypes.¹⁷

Downing’s several design books, dedicated to raising the standards of rural living, were so popular that the Swedish author Fredrika Bremer was told during her visit to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century that no one in America would think of building a house or planning a garden without consulting one of Downing’s books.¹⁸ Even almost twenty years later, the Langdons were probably no exception. Although Downing’s four books were published between 1841 and 1853, later editions continued in large printings until the late 1880s.



The house at Quarry Farm, Elmira, New York, ca. 1900. View from the road. Remodeled. (Mark Twain Archives, Elmira College, Elmira, New York.)

If not Downing's, the builder must have consulted a similar book in developing his conception of Quarry Farm. Both the house and gardens there reflect the advice not only of Downing (whose books were influenced by his several English predecessors' publications in the field of rural architecture and landscape gardening) but also of the numerous other American design book writers of the picturesque persuasion. Notable among them was Calvert Vaux (with whom Downing formed a partnership in 1850), who published his first edition of *Villas and Cottages* in 1857, and a later edition in the year that Langdon erected his house.

Indeed, the house expressed architect Vaux's proclamation that the dormer is a "capital feature" in a country house; that the chimney should "stride the ridge, be set-off in brick-work, and have a substantial look"; that ventilators be used for "convenience and artistic effect"; that hoods to windows are "useful shelters and also provide artistic effects"; and that there cannot be "too many bays for comfort and picturesque effect."¹⁹ Clearly the opportunity for achieving "artistic" and "picturesque" effects were not to be missed.

According to the design book authors of the time, indispensable qualities of the picturesque suburban and rural residence were simple forms and ornamentation, comfort and convenience, modest size, harmony with the landscape, reliance on local materials, and, of course, irregular composition, variety, intricacy, and movement.

Certainly, the house at Quarry Farm conformed to Downing's "valuable truths" of domestic architecture and the "Cottage Ornée," with its local stone foundation, clapboard siding, brackets, latticed and arbored-veranda, window hoods, dormers, roof ventilator, bay-window, tall ornamented chimney pots, and gables.

Its mood was antithetical to the classical aesthetic doctrine. Instead, it showed a tendency, as a country house should, to "spread out" and "extend itself on the ground."²⁰ By its "varied and picturesque form and outline," it appeared to have "some reasonable connexion, or be in perfect keeping, with surrounding nature." Thus, architectural beauty was considered "conjointly with the beauty of the landscape"—the ultimate picturesque ideal.²¹

Predictably, the stylistically acceptable forms for the philosophy of the picturesque were embraced at Quarry Farm. Its vernacular version of the Italianate style was an ornamental focus in the round arches of the veranda and dormers; in the oculus windows in the veranda lattice; and in the bracketed bay window, dormers, and rear porches. Examples

of these motifs were readily available in the popular house pattern books of the time. The “Bracketed” mode, Downing’s invention, included both Italian and Swiss features. He wrote:

It possesses a good deal of character, is capable of considerable picturesque effect, is very easily and cheaply constructed of wood or stone, and is perhaps more entirely adapted to our hot summers and cold winters than any other equally simple mode of building.”²²

Design X, “A Symmetrical, Bracketed Cottage, with Veranda,” in Downing’s *The Architecture of Country Houses*, is a reasonable prototype for the early Langdon house at Quarry Farm (Fig. 1).²³ Downing considered the design a “pleasing, symmetrical form [having] some picturesqueness of roof, united to considerable simplicity of construction, and an expression of more domestic enjoyment than cottages of this size usually exhibit.”²⁴ In Downing’s view, such “domestic enjoyment” had to do with the veranda, that ubiquitous form of American architecture which elevated a dwelling above the level of mere usefulness.

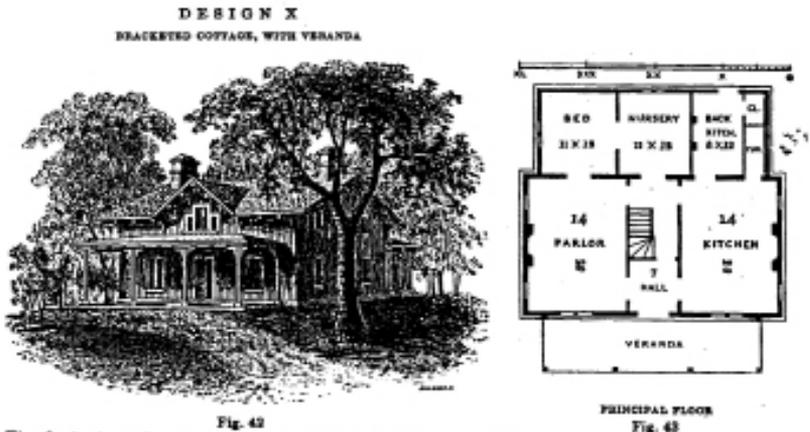


Fig. 3. Andrew Jackson Downing, “Design X, Bracketed Cottage, with Veranda,” figs. 42 and 43 in *Architecture of Country Houses* (New York, 1850).

Figure 1. Andrew Jackson Downing, “Design X, Bracketed Cottage, with Veranda,” figs. 42 and 43 in *Architecture of Country Homes* (New York, 1850).

Surely the most imposing aspect of the house at Quarry Farm is its latticed veranda, a feature recommended by Downing for cottages, because in summer it is the principal lounging spot, a “social resort” for the whole family; a feature “without which no country house is tolerable in the United States.”²⁵ Old photographs of the Langdon and Clemens families show that they made such use of the space, and here Twain poignantly recalled his wife, Livy, in her declining years: “During three peaceful months she spent most of her days reclining on the wide veranda, surrounded by those dearest to her, and looking out on the dreamlike landscape ...”²⁶

The veranda at Quarry Farm has existed in no less than four forms. Originally a narrow, arbored-veranda (sheltered by a vine-covered trellis), it was enlarged into a more generous width prior to 1886, soon



The latticed veranda at Quarry Farm, Elmira, New York, 1874. Destroyed. (Mark Twain Archives, Elmira College, Elmira, New York).

after the Cranes came to live year-round at Quarry Farm. It was converted into an “architectural veranda” (covered with a roof), sometime between 1890 and about 1900, perhaps soon after 1893 when Mrs. Crane returned to residency at the farm following her husband’s death. Finally, the flooring surface was altered from wood to slate in the 1950s, as it exists today.²⁷

As important as a veranda to the champions of the picturesque aesthetic was color. Fragments of the original painted siding on the cottage at Quarry Farm show that its drab hue was compatible with the picturesque color theory that Downing and others put forth at the time—soft and quiet neutral tints, such as fawn, drab, grey, or brown, those drawn from nature so that the cottage would blend into the landscape. To the advocates of the picturesque, there was little worse than the classicists’ preference for white houses, unless they were placed deeply into foliage in order to soften the glare.

Improvements intended to render the cottage even more useful and fashionable in both its interior and its exterior undoubtedly began soon after Susan Crane inherited the property in 1870. An extension



The architectural veranda at Quarry Farm, Elmira, New York, circa 1920s. (Mark Twain Archives, Elmira College, Elmira, New York).

to the rear—providing for a woodshed, pantry, servants’ and children’s sleeping rooms—was added probably in the early 1870s, when the extended family was coming to Quarry Farm to spend the summer.

A single-story parlor-bedroom wing was subsequently appended to the southeast side of the house. Twain’s daughter, Clara, later remembered that “Susy and I slept together, my younger sister, Jean, roomed with the nurse, and Father and Mother occupied a third room.”²⁸ That third room is said to have been the parlor-bedroom, destroyed by later remodeling but shown to the right of the bay window.²⁹

The chamfered corner at the southwest part of the house, a popular device in the latter decades of the nineteenth century used to negate the right angle and to offer another means of providing picturesque irregularity, was probably also created in the early years of the Crane residency. The adjacent exterior chimney, articulated with patterned brickwork, is also typical of that time. So, too, are the interior woodwork and fireplace surrounds. They reflect the doctrine of the “Aesthetic Movement,” championed by Charles Locke Eastlake in his *Hints on Household Taste* and by his American followers. Eastlake’s book was owned by Olivia Langdon Clemens in 1872, the year of its first American publication, undoubtedly as a reference for “the fashionable” at the time that she and Samuel were building their very grand house in Hartford, Connecticut.³⁰

More alterations and additions to Quarry Farm soon followed. Several interior and exterior details suggest an 1880s or 1890s date for the remodeled form that the house now takes. The dining room and parlor windows on the front (southwest side) were altered from the vertical shape of the 1870s to the horizontal proportions fashionable later in the century. And, as Calvert Vaux advocated, an arched parlor window, with panels below, was made to slide into a pocket, thus creating a wide door. This accounts for the threshold under that window, the pocket-door space added to the facade of the house, and the partial remains of locks and door casings.³¹

The wooden roller-blinds, mounted on the exterior parlor and dining room windows, are carved with a fan or sunburst design, in the manner of the Colonial Revival’s Queen Ann prototypes.³² Popularly used in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to decorate interior and exterior woodwork, furniture, and metal work, the same motif can be found at Quarry Farm on the drapery brackets in the parlor and dining room and at the back of the bookcases (a later addition) in the en-

trance hall. To be sure, this design was published in various versions in pattern books of the period. Hardly a woodworker in the country would have been unaware of those in the Palliser and Palliser publications.

The existing lattice decorating the veranda, with oculus openings and glazed sash, probably also date from the 1890s. It protected the windows and door at the entrance to the house from the prevailing winds in inclement weather, but at the same time admitted cooling breezes during the summer months. Clearly, there was great concern for controlling the effects of the weather in order to provide comfort—at first in the summer months, then year around after the house became a permanent residence for the Cranes. The pocket-door, roller-blinds, canvas shades and vines on the veranda, and a roof ventilator all attest to the attempts at controlling the climate for maximum comfort.

Sometime in the early twentieth century, the central gable of the facade was extended over the veranda roof to provide space for a summer bedroom. Incidentally, from this vantage point, the family handily communicated, by waved-sheet signals, to the Langdon house in town.³³

The Langdons and the Cranes were probably among the increasing number of people of fashion and wealth to respond to Downing's description of the delights and rewards of rural living. Perhaps the idea promoted by one design book writer that the "peculiar beauty and attractiveness about cottage architecture ... cannot be produced in larger mansions" appealed to them.³⁴ While Jervis Langdon had a palatial Italianate house in the center of Elmira, the cottage at Quarry Farm was a favorite retreat as well as a working, yet "ornamental" farm, managed by a tenant farmer.³⁵

In the nineteenth century, well-to-do Americans commonly had both town and country residences. Indeed, Downing claimed that the only reason to work in the city was to make enough money to retire to the country. Thus, Quarry Farm was used by the Langdons, the Cranes, and the Clemenses as a retreat from the business and social demands of town life in Elmira and Hartford, as well as a cooler place to spend the summers. Twain wrote from down-town Elmira: "It gets fearfully hot here in summer, so we spend our summers on top of a hill 6 or 700 feet high, about two or three miles from here—it never gets hot up there."³⁶

Albert Bigelow Paine, Twain's first official biographer, reported that Quarry Farm "was bought quite incidentally by Mr. and Mrs. Langdon, who, driving by one evening, stopped to water the horses and decided that it would make a happy summer retreat, where the fami-

lies could combine their housekeeping arrangements during vacation days.”³⁷ The idea was successfully implemented. The Clemenses “returned to this place as to Paradise: Clemens to his study and the books which he always called for, Mrs. Clemens to a blessed relief from social obligations, the children to shady play-places, the green, sloping hills, where they could race and tumble, and to all their animal friends.”³⁸ The ending of each year’s summer brought only regret. Clemens always left something behind in the belief—some call it superstition—that to leave some article would ensure return. Mrs. Clemens left her “heart’s content”; the children bid various objects good-by and “kissed the gates of [their much loved playhouse] Ellerslie.”³⁹

After her husband’s death in 1889, Mrs. Crane returned to the city of Elmira for a few years before going back to live at Quarry Farm.⁴⁰ Additional living accommodations for caretaker Ernest Koppe and his wife were subsequently extended to the northeast side.⁴¹ At Susan Crane’s death in 1924, the acreage, by then increased to 216 acres, passed to her nephew, the second Jervis Langdon.⁴² In 1925, according to the fashion of the period, he built a large, two-story, Tudor-revival addition, not unlike those Downing championed for country villas. It included a handsome “Elizabethan” library on the ground floor and bedrooms above. Thus, the simple, picturesque, clapboard and shuttered farmhouse was partially transformed into a more sophisticated stucco, brick, and half-timbered country residence.

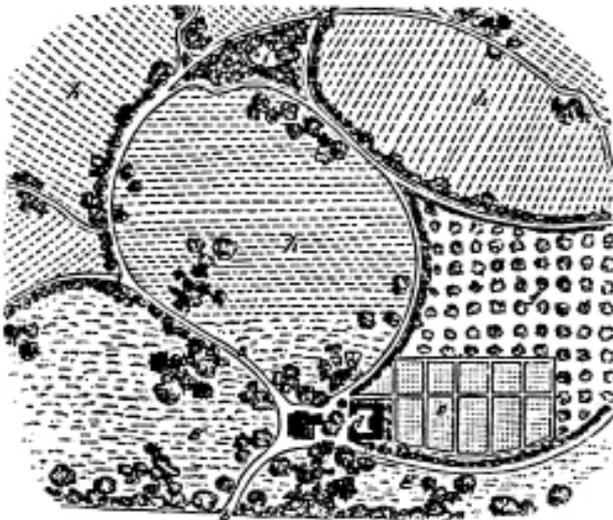
At Langdon’s death in 1952, his widow, Eleanor, continued to reside at Quarry Farm until her death in 1971. The property was then conveyed to her son, Jervis Langdon, Jr., who not only used it again as Downing had suggested—as a businessman’s retreat from the city—but who now considers it his ancestral home.

Quarry Farm was placed on the National Register of Historic Places of 13 March 1975. Jervis Langdon, Jr. gave the house and more than six acres of land to Elmira College in 1982. Quarry Farm now serves as the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies. The separate, former laundry and housekeeper’s quarters have been converted to The Gannett Educational Center, providing office and conference spaces, and a modern example of preservation by adaptive reuse.

Perhaps even more expressive of the philosophy of the picturesque than the house at Quarry Farm was its surrounding landscape. The grounds at Quarry Farm were planned according to the principles of the naturalistic English “landscape” style developed by Uvedale Price,

Richard Payne Knight, Lancelot “Capability” Brown, Humphrey Repton, John Claudius Loudon, and other English architects and theorists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Through the use of informal, asymmetrical designs, they sought to unite the powers of the landscape painter with those of the practical gardener in an attempt to create the effect of unspoiled nature. Sought after was a landscape that was variably romantic and poetic, but inevitably picturesque.

In their garden plans, Andrew Jackson Downing, Calvert Vaux, Frederick Law Olmsted, and others adapted those English ideas to the American scene. The extraordinarily popular writings of A. J. Downing broadly disseminated the philosophy of the picturesque in landscape, as well as in architecture, to thousands of Americans from the 1840s to nearly the end of the century. In his first work, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1841), he explained how the “*ferme ornée*,” or the “embellished” farm, could combine the beauty of the landscape garden with the utility of the farm.⁴³



[Fig. 22. View of a Picturesque farm (*ferme ornée*).]

Fig. 8. Andrew Jackson Downing. “View of a Picturesque farm (*ferme ornée*),” fig. 22 in *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America* (New York, 1841).

Figure 2. Andrew Jackson Downing. “View of a Picturesque farm (*ferme ornée*),” fig. 22 in *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America* (New York, 1841).

Indeed, the grounds at Quarry Farm were planned to reflect Downing's illustration of a "View of a Picturesque farm (*ferme ornée*)" published in that *Treatise* (Fig.2).⁴⁴ The approach from the public road, the locations of the dwelling, farm buildings, kitchen garden, orchard, grass and shrubbery, crops, trees, and circle drive, not to mention a nearby rocky thicket, were all paralleled in the scheme at Quarry Farm. Even his favored Lombardy poplar and oak trees still grow there. Of course rectangular plots for the crops would have been more efficient than random shapes for farming, but Downing assumed, rightly in this case, that the owner of an "ornamented farm" would not have profit as a first and only consideration.

Moreover, the grounds at Quarry Farm were laid out according to Sir Humphrey Repton's theory that a perfect landscape includes three distances: a foreground for a gardener to improve, a middle distance not always in his control, and the horizon outside his domain. Thus, although the house should have an extensive view, the landscape architect must provide for a connection between the near and far landscapes in the form of fences, scattered trees, grazing animals, and cultivated farm land—thus sparing the viewer a sense of violent contrast between near and far vistas.⁴⁵

In Downing's opinion, the cottage should be enhanced by a veranda and covered with vegetation—vines, climbers, and creepers—because it "covers up all that is ugly and heightens the charm of everything attractive and picturesque." Such a veranda would integrate the house with the garden, a belief also advanced by Richard Paine Knight and Joseph Gandy early in nineteenth century England.⁴⁷ The Veranda at Quarry Farm was liberally "draped" with Virginia Creeper (one of several vines that Downing found suitable for the purpose), enhancing its use as an outdoor living space.

In 1882, a journalist observed the "landscape gardening" features at Quarry Farm when he wrote that the house:

has an abundance of windows and glass doors on the south [actually the southwest side], so that from within, the lovely scenery in the valley below is plainly visible. An arched carriageway connects with the veranda, and the whole is protected from glare and heat by vines and awnings so as not to obstruct the view. In

front of the house and beyond the lawn, is a huge field of oats which completely shrouds the brow of the hill, and with its undulating surface softens and disguises an abruptness or roughness which there might otherwise be in the foreground.⁴⁷

Rudyard Kipling recorded a similarly picturesque image of Quarry Farm in a chapter of his *American Notes* after his visit to the farm in 1889:

It [Quarry Farm] was a very pretty house, anything but Gothic [he had been told that it was], clothed with ivy, standing in a very big compound, and fronted by a veranda full of chairs and hammocks. The roof of the veranda was a trellis-work of creepers, and the sun peeping through moved on the shining boards below.⁴⁸

Several ornamental structures in the landscape at Quarry Farm reflected still further the philosophy of the picturesque. One was Mark Twain's now famous octagonal study, built for him in the spring of 1874 by his sister-in-law Susan Crane, owner of Quarry Farm. It was located 100 yards above and beyond the house and not far from an abandoned quarry.⁴⁹ Approached by a steep, winding walk with rough, uneven stone steps, laid down according to picturesque principles, it gave Twain the privacy to write—even about the study itself:

It is the loveliest study you ever saw, it is octagonal with a peaked roof, each face filled with a spacious window, and it sits perched in complete isolation on the top of an elevation that commands leagues of valley and city and retreating ranges of distant blue hills. It is a cozy nest and just room in it for a sofa, table, and three or four chairs, and when the storms sweep down the remote valley and the lightning flashes behind the hills beyond and the rain

beats upon the roof over my head, imagine the luxury of it.⁵⁰

Albert Bigelow Paine referred to Twain's study as a "little room of windows somewhat suggestive of a pilot-house."⁵¹ While the windows on all sides of the brown wooden structure (including one through the fireplace chimney—a conceit of late nineteenth century architecture) probably inspired that analogy, the octagonal form represented a shape fashionable in the United States after 1848 for houses, churches, school houses, and numerous minor structures, including seance chambers. Although an architectural form used since ancient Greece, and in early America from classical sources, its popularity in the latter half of the nineteenth century surely resulted from Orson Fowler's success in championing the shape in his *A Home for All; or, the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building*.⁵²

The octagon fad was, of course, just another part of the experimental intellectual climate of mid-nineteenth century culture that produced advocates of vegetarianism, dress reform, utopian religions, genetic experimentation, water therapy, spiritualism, miraculous cures, and phrenology. While all these crusades were practiced in upstate New York, the latter three movements have especially to do with Twain or Elmira.

As part of the interest in spiritualism then current in Hartford. Twain made an attempt in 1879 to talk to his deceased brother Henry through a medium.⁵³ Both Twain and Livy became interested in palmistry and spiritualism, attending seances together and visiting mediums after their daughter Susy died in 1896. Throughout his later life, Twain was fascinated by mind science and faith healers.⁵⁴ In reacting to several illnesses in the family, he looked for miraculous cures through hydrotherapy, osteopathy, electric treatments, mind cure, health foods, and homemade *nostra*.⁵⁵

The reformist Fowler, along with his classmate at Amherst College, Henry Ward Beecher, became captivated by phrenology and the "science" of analyzing personality characteristics on the basis of the contours of the skull. Twain was a friend of Beecher and his sister Harriet Beecher Stowe (a neighbor in Hartford) along with their half-brother the Reverend Thomas K. Beecher of Park Church, Elmira. Twain frequently visited the Beecher home, located just down Watercure Hill Road (which name reflects one of the experimental cults of the era) from Quarry Farm. Apparently Twain became intrigued by phrenology, too, for in

1901 he had a phrenological analysis done by the firm of Fowler and Wells of New York City.⁵⁶ Later, Twain related that his analysis showed him to be a person without humor. He discounted not phrenology, but rather the practitioners.⁵⁷

“Ellerslie,” the playhouse of Twain’s daughters, was not meant to be principally a garden ornament. Yet, it too served a picturesque function in the farm landscape. It was named after the Scottish hero Sir William Wallace’s hermitage, “Glen of Ellerslie,” a place made known to the children by Jane Porter’s romantic, historical novel *Scottish Chiefs*.⁵⁸ The playhouse was located 100 yards below [West of] the study, “amongst the clover and young oaks and willows.”⁵⁹ Ellerslie, which the children “tastefully decorated” and furnished with a stove, table, chairs, shelves, dishes, and a broom, was built by Susan Crane for her nieces, probably in 1886 on fenced grounds “deeded” to them.⁶⁰ It was of board and batten construction, like the stable and the barn, a method that Downing highly recommended for picturesque structures.⁶¹

Nature’s “architecture” was a popular form admired by mid-nineteenth century philosophers of landscape gardening. At Quarry Farm, “Helen’s Bower” was the name of the tangle of bushes originally in



“Ellerslie,” the Clemens children’s playhouse at Quarry Farm, Elmira, New York, ca. 1886. Destroyed. (Mark Twain Papers, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California.)

back of Ellerslie. It was a name that appealed to the Clemenses' daughter Susy's "poetic fancy" after reading the romantic novel *Thaddeus of Warsaw*.⁶² Alas, a workman, who was sent to clean up the debris after construction of the playhouse, cleaned away the bower as well.

Open and covered rustic seats were also considered by landscape gardeners to be among the most useful decorations for the grounds of a country residence. Downing advocated latticed arbors, formed of rough posts, because they were informal, irregular, rough, and of nature's material—all characteristic of picturesque design qualities. He considered them especially suitable for wilder areas of the landscape and pointed out that "rustic seats placed here and there in the most inviting spots, will both heighten the charm and enable us to enjoy at leisure the quiet beauty around."⁶³ Moreover, by mid-century, nature was perceived as having a moral aspect and, thus, "honesty" was reflected in rustic garden furniture constructed with twigs, roots, and bark.

The arbor at Quarry Farm, located 30 yards above the study, was just such a rustic seat and of sufficient interest for Twain to describe it in a letter: "On the peak of the hill is an old arbor roofed with bark and



The arbor framing Twain's study at Quarry Farm, Elmira, New York, ca. 1874. Destroyed.

covered with the vine you call the American Creeper. Its green is almost bloodied with red.”⁶⁴

Another, less rustic, but every bit as picturesque a seat was the polygonal gazebo, located between the house and the road. With latticed sides and a pagoda-like configuration to the roof, it expressed the fashionable “Oriental” taste, deemed appropriate for the gentler areas of the landscape.

Yet another was a summer house called the “tent.” It was situated 50 yards above the study, at a high ridge above the abandoned quarry.⁶⁵ Reached by a long and intricate walk through red clover beds, it was a pleasant place for Twain to muse and for the family to enjoy a summer’s afternoon. Twain wrote: “The Cranes are reading and loafing in the canvas-curtained summer-house, ... the cats are loafing over at Ellerslie.”⁶⁶

One of Twain’s letters shows that the tent, like the study, was built in 1874, or possibly before.⁶⁷ It is probably reasonable to assume that all of these garden ornaments, built to enable the family to work and relax with the maximum exposure to nature and cooling breezes, were constructed in one building campaign soon after Susan Crane inherited



The summer house called “the tent” at Quarry Farm, Elmira, New York, 1903. Destroyed.

the property in 1870 and was spending summers at Quarry Farm, along with extended families.

The tent at Quarry Farm was an hexagonal structure, supported by six posts at the perimeter and a center post, the latter surrounded by a bench.⁶⁸ It was fitted with rustic chairs and hammocks. If there were not a breeze to be found at the house, the entire family retired there to sleep and enjoy a place open on all sides to the available air.⁶⁹ The occupants could be protected from adverse weather by rolling down the canvas shades at the sides of the structure, not unlike those installed on the veranda of the house.

Illustrations in house pattern-books of the 1870s and 1880s show that summer houses could be constructed in a variety of forms by an “artist of some fancy and ingenuity,” hexagonal and octagonal forms being most popular.⁷⁰ These, among other geometric shapes, were a part of the architectural vocabularies associated with both the nineteenth century’s Gothic and its Renaissance Revival styles. By the last quarter of the century, polygonal shapes often had both far and middle-Eastern connotations as well. Also expressive of the Asian design fashion in eighteenth and nineteenth century America was the use of fabric canopies over garden seats, draperies and fringes on furniture, and the suggestion of tent-like forms in ornamental garden architecture. All of these fashions were embraced at Quarry Farm.

Other picturesque effects at the farm included rail fences, considered by landscape gardeners to be the least offensive type in character and color. Covered with vines, the very long dry-stone wall extending about 150 yards from the upper to the lower gates along the roadside of Quarry Farm (still surviving today) also appeared picturesque in its irregularity and roughness; it blended with and was part of the natural landscape. By its side were planted “many lovely flowers—nasturtiums, pansies, roses, forget-me-nots, and so forth.”⁷¹

An abandoned rock quarry was yet another picturesque amenity highly regarded by most landscape gardeners. Although the one on this site was undoubtedly not dug for picturesque purposes, the fact that Thomas K. Beecher suggested that the site be called “Quarry Farm” is perhaps a result of that aesthetic philosophy.⁷²

Finally, Downing advocated “prospect towers” with thatched roofs from which to take the views. “If you have flat ground, you must build a tower,” he wrote.⁷³ The Clemens family planned to build such a tower of stone in a nearby field at Quarry Farm, from which Twain could

dream, “forgetting the world.” Because the site is not at all flat, the idea of building a tower must have appealed for the fashionable picturesque reason. Twain’s daughter, Clara, tells of the family competing to collect stones with which to erect the tower and reports that her father dabbled in this endeavor because he stopped to study and then expound on the shape of the stone itself or the imprint it left in the soil. Thus, his “tongue flowed with observation while his feet stood still.”⁷⁴

Although the tower was never built, the landscape at Quarry Farm was abundantly ornamented by a picturesque country residence replete with an arbored-veranda and carriageway, a stable and barn, Twain’s study, a summer-house, a gazebo, a rustic arbor, a playhouse, as well as near, middle, and far vistas—all appropriately articulated by a circular drive, trees, shrubbery, farm crops, and grazing animals.

This study of Quarry Farm and the philosophy of the picturesque reveals that the house and landscape there were intended to express the well known picturesque aesthetic, that of the “ornamented farm.”

It might be concluded that this type of house and grounds particularly suited Twain, whose individuality and untamed manner—with flaring eyebrows and hats placed carelessly on a tangled confusion of bushy hair—made him the ultimate of the picturesque personality.

The farm environment suited him as well. In his later years Twain wrote: “I should desire nothing more than to retire to a quiet farm to spend my declining days. I love the farm, I love everything on the farm. I was raised on the farm, but did not like it then. Times have changed me.”⁷⁵ His wish was granted when he retired to “Stormfield,” his home near Redding, Connecticut, to spend the last years of his life.

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Notes

¹Andrew Jackson Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America* (New York: A. O. Moore and Co., Sixth ed., 1859; originally published in 1841), p. 99.

²Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage Residences* (Watkins Glen, New York: Library of Victorian Culture, reprint of 1842 ed., 1967), p. 84.

³Uvedale Price, *Essays on the Picturesque* (Edinburgh: Caldwell, Lloyd, and Co., 1842; originally published in 1794), pp. 69, 82. Downing, *Treatise*, p. 48.

⁴"Mark Twain's Summer Home, A Visit to His House and Study in the Suburbs of Elmira," Elmira (N.Y.) Correspondence, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, cited from *The New York Times*, 10 September 1882. [Quoted here from the *Mark Twain Society Bulletin*, vol. 1, No.1, February 1978], pp. 1-2.

⁵Albert Bigelow Paine, *Mark Twain, A Biography*, 3 vols. (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1912) 1:339, 352-355, 367-369. Also see Justin Kaplan, *Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, A Biography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), pp. 52, 65-66, 79-83, 89-91, 93.

⁶Samuel L. Clemens to Dr. John Brown in Edinburgh, 22 June 1876, Elmira, New York, in Albert Bigelow Paine, *Mark Twain's Letters*, 2 vols. (Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1917) 1 :280.

⁷Samuel L. Clemens to Joseph Twichell, 1879, Elmira, New York, in Paine, *Letters*, 2:650.

⁸Samuel L. Clemens to Mr. Whitmore, 8 August 1881, Mark Twain Memorial, Hartford, Connecticut. [Cited here from microfilm roll no. 1, Mark Twain Archives, Elmira College, Elmira, New York].

⁹Samuel L. Clemens to William Dean Howells, 9 August 1876, in Paine, *Letters*, 1:282.

¹⁰Samuel L. Clemens to Elisha Bliss, Jr., 15 May 1871, in Paine, *Letters*, 1:187. Clemens to Howells, 20 July 1883, in Paine, *Letters*, 1:433.

¹¹Kaplan, p. 251.

¹²Edwin J. Park, "A Day with Mark Twain," *Chicago Tribune*, September 19, 1886, in Louis J. Budd, ed., "Interviews with Samuel L. Clemens, 1874-1910," *American Literary Realism* 10, no. 1 (1977):42.

¹³See Extracts of Survey in Township of Chemung, copied from Field Book 27 in the Land Bureau Office, Department of State, Albany, New York, p. 45, Chemung County Clerk's Office. Also see Chemung County Deeds, Liber 16, p. 23; Chemung County Deeds, Liber 50, p. 580.

¹⁴Map by Samuel and M. Rea and A. V. Tremble. Thomas E. Byrne, *Chemung County 1890-1975* (Elmira, New York: Chemung County Historical Society, 1976), p. 27. Also see Ida Langdon, "Elmira's Langdon

Family,” in Robert D. Jerome and Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr., eds., *Mark Twain in Elmira* (Elmira, New York: Mark Twain Society, 1977), pp. 22, 53.

¹⁵Chemung County Surrogate Court, Record of Wills, vol. 7, p. 139; package number 3406.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Andrew Jackson Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses* (New York: D. Appleton Company, 1850; reprint ed., New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969), Section II. Also see Downing, *Treatise*, pp. 333-351.

¹⁸*The Homes of the New World* (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1853), 1:46.

¹⁹*Villas and Cottages* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1867), pp. 103-108.

²⁰Downing, *Country Houses*, pp. 32-33.

²¹Downing, *Treatise*, p. 320.

²²Ibid., pp. 338-339.

²³Downing, *Country Houses*, Figs. 42 and 43.

²⁴Ibid., p. 119.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 120, 281.

²⁶Paine, *A Biography*, 3: 1206.

²⁷Downing, *Country Houses*, p.120. Paine, *A Biography*, 2:880. A documented photograph of 1874 shows the narrow arbored-veranda. The account of a *Chicago Tribune* reporter’s visit to Quarry Farm in 1886 (with accompanying wood engravings) mentioned and illustrated a large arbored-veranda with the flooring extended to the front porch posts. Rudyard Kipling evoked that extended arbored-veranda after his visit to Quarry Farm in 1889. Photographed circa 1900, the architectural-veranda is clearly in evidence. Fred Petrie, Elmira architect, has told the author that he was responsible for changing the flooring from wood to slate sometime in the early 1950s. Also see pp. 22-23 for the Kipling text of 1889.

²⁸Clara Clemens, *My Father, Mark Twain* (New York: Harper and Brothers 1931; renewed 1959), p. 59.

²⁹As told to Jervis Langdon, Jr. by his father.

³⁰Alan Gribben, *Mark Twain’s Library: A Reconstruction*, 2 vols. (Boston: G. K. Hall and Company, 1980), p. 210, states that the book was signed on the second flyleaf: “Livy L. Clemens, 1872.” He added that it “looks well used.” Eastlake’s book was published in London in 1868 and in Boston in 1872.

³¹Vaux, *Villas and Cottages*, p. 113, advises that the most perfect window arrangement was “to prepare a case in the wall sufficiently large to contain the sash, the blind, and shutter, and slide each into the recess.” Although not constructed as Vaux proposed, the effect at Quarry Farm was similar. Susan Crane wrote to Samuel L. Clemens probably in 1906: “When the big parlor window at Quarry Farm was made it did not give me more joy [than a small one she had as a child in an attic bedroom in the Langdon house on Third Street], if as much.” Mark Twain Project, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley [cited here from microfilm roll number 2208, Mark Twain Archives, Elmira College, Elmira, New York].

³²The blinds are marked: by J. G. Watson/Patentee Manuft/958 B’dway/New York. No record of the firm has been located by the author in New York City directories of 1880-1900.

³³Jervis Langdon, Jr. to author, telephone interview 15 May 1988.

³⁴George Woodward, *Woodward’s Country Homes* (New York: George E. and F. W. Woodward, 1865), p. 133.

³⁵At Jervis Langdon’s death in 1870, the farm consisted of corn, potatoes, oats, hay, an apple orchard, peach trees, three cows, and many chickens and turkeys. Inventory in “Record of Wills.” Susan Crane operated the first dairy farm in Chemung County at Quarry Farm from ca. 1902-1919 in order to develop improved methods of pasteurization and to comply with the strict requirements established by the Elmira Academy of Medicine’s Milk Commission to produce certified milk. See Gretchen Sharlow, “The Cranes of Quarry Farm,” unpublished manuscript, 1989.

³⁶Samuel L. Clemens, Elmira, New York, to Dr. John Brown in Edinburgh, 27 April 1874, Paine, *Letters*, 1:218. In later years, the Clemenses’ houses at Riverdale-on-the-Hudson (New York), Fiesole (Italy), and Redding (Connecticut) were sited on hills overlooking wide pastoral views.

³⁷Paine. *A Biography*, 1:434.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 2:577.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 825.

⁴⁰Susan L. Crane was listed in the Elmira City Directories from 1890-1892 as a boarder at 303 North Main Street, the Langdon house.

⁴¹See Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr., “Sixty Years at Quarry Farm,” *Mark Twain Society Bulletin*, vol. 10, no. 2 (July 1987), p. 134.

⁴²“Record of Wills:” vol. 28, p. 354, package 12,276.

⁴³Downing, *Treatise*, p. 98.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, fig. 22, p. 99.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 89. For years Susan Crane desired to have her cows in the lower lot in front of the house but there were always crops in the way or the fence was down. To honor her summer-time return to the farm in 1890, the cows were pastured where she could see them. Susan Crane to Jean Clemens, 8 October 1890, Mark Twain Project, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley [cited here from microfilm roll number 2208, Mark Twain Archives, Elmira College, Elmira, New York].

⁴⁶Downing, *Rural Essays* (New York: George P. Putnam and Company, 1853), p. 89. Michael Hugo-Brunt, “Downing and the English Landscape Tradition,” Introduction to Downing, *Cottage Residences*, n.p.

⁴⁷“Mark Twain’s Summer Home,” pp. 1-3.

⁴⁸Paine, *A Biography*, 2:880.

⁴⁹The study was moved in 1952 to the Elmira College campus because of vandalism. An archaeological project, conducted by Elmira College in 1986, documents its foundation.

⁵⁰Budd, “Interviews,” p. 42; Samuel L. Clemens to Reverend and Mrs. Twichell in Hartford, 11 June 1874, Elmira, New York, in Paine, *Letters*, 1:219-220; and Paine, *A Biography*, 1:508.

⁵¹Paine, *A Biography*, 1:507. No octagonal pilot-houses are known to this author.

⁵²New York: Fowler and Wells, 1848. Architect Edward Potter included a demi-octagonal tower in Twain’s house in Hartford, Connecticut, built the same year as the study. It was a popularly employed architectural form in the last half of the nineteenth century.

⁵³Kaplan, *Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, A Biography*, p. 203.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 203, 338.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 247. Hamlin Hill, *Mark Twain God’s Fool* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973), p. 7, lists an imposing array of illnesses with which Twain had been afflicted.

⁵⁶Gribben, *Mark Twain’s Library*, 1:237.

⁵⁷Charles Neider, ed., *Autobiography of Mark Twain* (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1959), pp. 64-66.

⁵⁸(Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1870, originally published in 1810), pp. 27- 67. Also see Budd, “Interviews:” pp. 42-43, and Paine, *A Biography*, p. 824. I believe that Paine incorrectly states that the name derived from Grace Aguilar, *The Days of Bruce* 2 vols. (New York: D.

Appleton, 1852, originally published in 1834). In Porter's *Scottish Chiefs*, "Ellerslie" was William Wallace's retreat from the world (as it was for the Clemens girls), a self-imposed exile, in order to forget that Edward reigned in Scotland. The name was also used for one of the most celebrated picturesque estates on the Hudson River—the design by foremost Gothic Revivalist architect Richard Upjohn for client William Kelley, published in Downing, *Treatise*, p. 3.

⁵⁹Clemens to Millie (Mrs. Orion Clemens) in Keokuk, Iowa, 10 July 1887, Elmira, New York, Paine, *Letters*, 2:488-489.

⁶⁰Paine, *A Biography*, 2:284; Julie Langdon, on 25 July 1886, states in her diary: "Spent the day at the farm and saw the dear little cottage at Ellerslie." Diary, property of Jervis Langdon, Jr. Budd, "Interviews," p. 43, reveals that it existed in 1886. Paine, *A Biography*, 2: facing p. 824, pp. 824-825, suggests an 1885 date. Neider, *Letters*, p. 180.

⁶¹Later photographs show the playhouse roofed with shingles.

⁶²Jane Porter, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (Ithaca, New York: Mark, Andrus, and Woodruff, 1842, originally published before 1810). Also see Paine, *A Biography*, 2:284; Edith Colgate Salisbury, *Susy and Mark Twain* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 20.

⁶³Downing, *Cottage Residences*, p. 119. First recorded by Matthew Darly and George Edwards in 1754, Chinese furniture made from gnarled roots inspired numerous English adaptations. See Morrison Heckscher, "Eighteenth Century Rustic Furniture Designs," *Furniture History*, vol. 11 (1975), pp. 59-65.

⁶⁴Twain to Dr. John Brown in Edinburgh, 4 September 1874, Elmira, New York, in Paine, *Letters*, 1:224-226. The Virginia Creeper is sometimes called the American Creeper.

⁶⁵Samuel L. Clemens to the Reverend and Mrs. Twichell in Hartford, 11 June 1874, Elmira, New York (in Paine, *Letters*, 1:219-220) mentions Susy is climbing the hill to the summer house. Desirable locations of summer houses are discussed in Downing, *Cottage Residences*, p. 162.

⁶⁶Samuel L. Clemens to Mrs. Orion Clemens in Keokuk, Iowa, 10 July 1887, in Paine, *Letters*, 2:488-489; Paine, *A Biography*, 2:825.

⁶⁷Samuel L. Clemens to the Reverend and Mrs. Twichell in Hartford, 11 June 1874, Elmira, New York, in Paine, *Letters*, 1:219-220.

⁶⁸Its foundation was discovered in 1986 by Gretchen Sharlow, Associate Director of the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies at Quarry Farm.

⁶⁹Budd, “Interviews,” p. 42.

⁷⁰The quoted words are from Downing, *Treatise*, p. 396.

⁷¹Clara Clemens, *My Father Mark Twain*, p. 61.

⁷²Previous names had been “Go as You Please Hall,” “Crane’s Nest,” and “Rest and be Thankful Hall.” Paine, *A Biography*, 1 :434; Samuel L. Clemens to Jeanette Gilder, 14 May 1887, Neider, *Letters*, p. 178; Clara Clemens, *My Father Mark Twain*, p. 59.

⁷³Downing, *Treatise*, p. 396.

⁷⁴Clara Clemens, *My Father Mark Twain*, p. 61.

⁷⁵Mark Twain, “New Ideas on Farming,” in Robert J. Burdette, *Gems of Modern Wit and Humor* (Chicago: The L. W. Walter Company, 1903), pp. 55-56.

Chapter Eleven

Mark Twain's Elmira Circle

Theodore Crane

Katie Leary

Auntie Cord

John T. Lewis

Ernest Koppe

The Cats

Susan and Theodore Crane

Rudyard Kipling's 1889 "chase" up East Hill to meet Mark Twain ended in failure. Instead of greeting the famous author at Quarry Farm, as he had hoped, he reversed his pathway down the hill to find Samuel Clemens in Elmira. During his brief pause on East Hill, however, Kipling observed: "Decidedly this remote place was an ideal one for work, if a man could work among these soft airs and the murmur of the long-eared crops." During his short stop at Quarry Farm, Kipling sensed both the creative magic and the seductive distractions and inspirations of the place—some from the natural world, some human, some animal. The following essays explore the family, friends—and felines—who influenced Samuel Langhorne Clemens while at Quarry Farm.

Theodore Crane: A New Perspective

by Gretchen E. Sharlow

Published in the Mark Twain Society Bulletin, Vol. XIII, No. 1, January, 1990, pages 1-6. At the time, Gretchen Sharlow was Associate Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Quarry Farm and had been doing research on Susan Langdon Crane for several years. Here, she challenges Dixon Wecter's

evaluation of Mark Twain's brother-in-law and suggests that Crane had a significant influence on the Clemens family during their summers at Quarry Farm. (This essay developed into a longer study on Theodore and Susan Crane which is included as the final piece in this chapter.)

Wecter was right in stating that Mark Twain adored his sister-in-law, Susan Crane (MTMF 140). Everyone seems to have adored Susan Crane. He was right too in noting that Mark Twain's feelings for his brother-in-law, Theodore Crane, were cooler than his feelings were for Susan Crane, although "reserved" might be the better choice to describe those feelings. Probably Wecter was right too when he declared that Theodore Crane was "occasionally a positive irritant to Mark Twain" (LLMT 251). Most people occasionally irritated Mark Twain. Wecter's charge that Theodore Crane was "an egotistic mediocrity" and "never a favorite of Mark Twain," however, is too strong and may have contributed unfairly to the misconceptions about Theodore Crane and to obscure his significant influence on Mark Twain's family life and literature.

Contrary to hometown legend labelling Theodore "a poor farm boy," his parents Hiram and Ann Eliza Crane were leading Elmira citizens. They were neighbors of Olivia Clemens' parents, Jervis and Olivia Lewis Langdon, during the mid 1840s and early 1850s. Like Jervis Langdon, Hiram Crane was a prosperous lumber merchant. The Cranes, along with other pronounced anti-slavery people, broke from Elmira's First Presbyterian Church and, with the Langdons, founded the Independent Congregational Church in 1846.

Olivia Clemens' older sister, Susan Langdon, was twenty-three when she was married in her family home by the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher to twenty-seven-year-old Theodore Crane on December 7, 1858. A portion of an anniversary greeting written from Hartford by Susan's mother, Olivia Lewis Langdon, dated December 7, 1883, is a testimonial to their happy marriage: "My dear children—on the twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage—... I am glad that your life together has, for a quarter century been so exceptionally happy—and that your increasing love for, and fidelity toward each other have been rewarded by such satisfactory and peaceful result Well I remember the day (stormy without) when you stepped into your life-bark together and sailed away, each with, and for the other, leaving all else behind. But my comfort was found in this—that you would find your mooring and Home in Elmira" (MTA).

Hiram Crane died May 24, 1859. By 1861, Theodore Crane became affiliated with the Langdon enterprise that had expanded from lumber into a prospering coal business. He remained an executive of J. Langdon and Company for the rest of his life.

Susan and Theodore Crane's home in Elmira was Quarry Farm. They had no children of their own, but the Farm became the birthplace and summer paradise for Mark Twain's daughters. For more than twenty summers, the Clemens family lived at Quarry Farm with Susan and Theodore. It was without a doubt a place where Mark Twain found great peace and serenity. The octagonal study, which was on a remote high spot one hundred yards from the main house, is famous as the place where the major portions of Mark Twain's classics such as *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* were written.

A favorite story in Mark Twain lore about Mark Twain's and Livy's engagement is that Livy's father, in spite of disparaging character references, said reassuringly to Clemens, "I will be your friend myself. Take the girl. I know you better than they do." A chapter from *New York in Literature* by Rufus Rockwell and Otilie Wilson (1947) places Theodore Crane at the scene of the engagement action: "... from the first Jervis Langdon had faith in the essential manliness of his daughter's suitor, and ... on February 4, 1869, gave his approval to a formal engagement. Olivia's mother and elder sister, aware that she knew her own mind, seconded this approval, and so did the latter's husband, Theodore Crane, who, long before had read Mark Twain's sketches and now endorsed him without reserve" (quoted in MTE, 5).

Evidence that Theodore Crane appreciated good literature survives in the Elmira College Mark Twain Archives. The Archive houses many of his books containing Mark Twain's annotations, including early sets of Dickens, Shakespeare and W.E.H. Lecky. Numerous books have inscriptions, "To. T. W. Crane from S.L. Clemens."

Theodore Crane's company and his fine library were among the attractions for Mark Twain at Quarry Farm. The Paine biography states:

He found comfort in the society of Theodore Crane. Those two were always fond of each other, and often read together the books in which they were mutually interested. They had portable-hammock arrangements which they placed side by side on the lawn,

and read and discussed through summer afternoons
(I: 510).

Scholars are unanimous in their appreciation for the profound effect of the Lecky books on Mark Twain's works and philosophy. His introduction to Lecky took place at Quarry Farm in 1874 and the volumes of *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* belonged to Theodore Crane (Gribben 1:400).

Other books noted by Paine as favorites were *The Mutineers of the Bounty*, *Pepys' Diary* and *Two Years Before the Mast*. The two men read and reread articles from the *Atlantic* and, according to Paine, " 'A Majestic Literary Fossil' (1890) grew out of a curious old medical work containing absurd prescriptions which with Theodore Crane, he [Twain] had often laughed over at the farm" (1:510, II:899).

Wecter seems to have based his judgment of Theodore Crane as an irritant to Mark Twain on one letter, written from Buffalo to Mrs. Fairbanks, November 5, 1870. Langdon Clemens was born prematurely two days later. It was a stressful time. The family was in mourning over Jervis Langdon's death from stomach cancer on August 6, 1870, and the September 29th death of Livy's school friend, Emma Nye, who had been ill with typhoid fever for a month before dying in the Clemens' bed. Twain wrote—

Dear Mother:

... I want you back here just as quick as you can get through there at home. Susie will wait till then. Theodore appears to have mysteriously decided not to spend Sunday here—for which I am duly thankful. But he will die if he has to go ten days without seeing Sue. Charley writes me privately that Theodore remarked, when Sue came here, that "every time any of them in Buffalo had the stomach ache his wife had to go there"—& intimated that he was tired of it. So you see we naturally want to send Sue home to the calf as soon as possible (MTMF 139).

Other letters are brimming with inside family humor and loving sentiment. The following are just three examples:

From Mark Twain to Susan Crane, London, 1872:

If you and Theodore will come over in the spring with Livy and me and spend the summer you shall see a country that is so beautiful that you will be obliged to believe in fairy-land ... And Theodore can browse with me among dusty old dens that look now as they looked five hundred years ago; and puzzle over books in the British Museum that were made before Christ was born... . I would a good deal rather live here if I could get the rest of you over (Paine 1:410).

From Mark Twain, 1872:

Dear old Susie ... I'll enclose a couple for Theodore—but both of them put together ain't as good as that child's trumpet story ... Love to the jolly household, Saml (LL 171).

FLAG [change on 270 as well? \(in works cited list\)](#)

From Theodore Crane to Mark Twain, September 15, 1885:

Dear Mr. Clemens, Your telegram reached us, while sitting on the stoop trying to comfort the cats who have to miss you all as much as we do. The place from the tent to the lower gate seems funereal and desolate. We look for Jean she is not, for Clara and Susie and they do not appear. The donkeys hang their heads and mourn—their occupation is gone and they will soon go into winter quarters and the cats will be distributed (except Sour Mash) to new owners—all this should not be—Sell the Castle and build on Quarry Farm, and let Susie teach the District School and Clara and Jean become her pupils. I will keep you posted about the Coal business, and we will keep our spirits alive until you return next June or we go to you

in the winter. Sue joins me in very much love
(Mark Twain Archives, Microfilm Collection,
2208:27).

The decade of the eighties ended sadly for the Crane and the Clemens families. On September 6, 1888, Theodore Crane suffered a paralyzing stroke. The Clemenses rescheduled their departure date from September 13th to the 24th. In the Mark Twain Archives is a book given to Theodore Crane when the Clemens left Quarry Farm. The flyleaf of *Mark Twain's Library of Humor* is inscribed, "To Theodore W. Crane with the love of SLC, September 23, 1888."

By Thanksgiving, the Cranes were in Hartford where they remained for two months so that Susan could have Livy's help with Theodore's care. Theodore suffered physical pain as well as depression and the family was in constant anticipation of his death. In mid-October, Clemens had written in his notebook, "NOTA Ein Todt-Bezeichniss anstellen lassen, in N.Y." Have the death notice prepared in N. Y. (*N&J* 3:427).

During this difficult time, Mark Twain was completing his work on *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Howard Baetzhold describes the period:

Once the Valley episodes were finished, progress on the novel during September and October was more rapid. The book was going so well, in fact, that on October 5 Clemens hopefully named October 22 as the date when both the novel and the Paige Typesetter might be finished. Again his calculations proved optimistic. But by some time in March the holocaust of the Sand-Belt had burned itself out, and the author had brought the Yankee back to die in modern England, not by suicide as in his original plan, but still, in a way, yearning for his "lost land" (MTJB 130).

Baetzhold notes that these specific dates are from a letter written by Mark Twain to Theodore Crane, October 5, 1888. By March, 1889, Theodore, discouraged and contemplating suicide, received a letter from

the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher advising against suicide. "Such an act would not save Sue, but would load on her patient soul a life-long burden—a sense of having failed to satisfy you and give you peace" (MTA). Knowing the close relationship and constant involvement between the two families, one must conclude that Theodore Crane's stroke and painful ten-month struggle before his July, 1889, death must have had a direct effect not only on the completion schedule, but also on the change of plan and on the poignant ending of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

The Clemens family and Susan Crane were with Theodore at Quarry Farm when he died the evening of July 3, 1889. The death notice was printed in the next morning's edition of the *Elmira Advertiser*. It appears to have been prepared by a veteran newspaper reporter who knew Theodore Crane well, undoubtedly by Mark Twain:

DEATH OF THEODORE W. CRANE
*His Demise Occurred at 7 O'clock Last Evening:
Sketch of His Life.*

Theodore W. Crane died at his residence on East Hill last evening at 7 o'clock, passing quietly away after two days of unconsciousness and a long illness. The news of Mr. Crane's death will be received with widespread regret. It is a blow not only to afflicted relatives and friends, but to Elmira as a city, for he was one of the representative men who give a place a reputation and a name.

Mr. Crane was born September 26, 1831, at Havana, Schuyler county, this state. He was married to a daughter of the late Jervis Langdon in December, 1859, [sic] and his wife survives him. In November, 1861, he became connected with Jervis Langdon in business, and in the winter of 1861 and 1862 managed a large coal business for Mr. Langdon in Washington. Returning to Elmira he continued his relations with the house, and after Mr. Langdon's death he still continued [as] the financial manager of the incorporated company which succeeded to the large business. He was, in fact, regarded as

one of the best judges of credits in this section of the state, often being consulted by bankers and others in regard to making loans and as a general financier had few equals. The 4th day of last September he was taken ill, suffering from a slight paralytic stroke and retired from business the 6th of that month. His health continued impaired and although he went to New York for a period of several months in hopes of finding renewed strength and vigor, it was a hopeless journey and he returned only to gradually fail until death relieved his sufferings.

Theodore Crane was a thoroughly good man, as genial, charitable and whole souled as he was able and active in business. For a good many years, twenty at least, he was treasurer of the board of trustees of Park church. He was active and tireless in the work of building that magnificent edifice as he was in all church work and that society will sadly miss him.

The time of the funeral has not yet been determined, but it will be held from the residence of Charles J. Langdon, the homestead, on Main street.

Years later, when discussing J. Langdon and Company for his *Autobiography* and speaking only of Theodore Crane's role as part of that business, Mark Twain made the following comments, which probably influenced Dixon Wecter's misconceptions: "Theodore Crane was competent in his line—that of head clerk and Superintendent of the subordinate clerks. No better man could have been found for that place; but his capacities were limited to that position. He was good and upright and indestructibly honest and honorable, but he had neither desire or ambition to anything above a chief clerk. He was much too timid to larger work or larger responsibilities" (MTA, 5043:2).

Considering all of the evidence, one must conclude that the portrait of Theodore Crane is that of an intelligent, gentle, secure and contented man. He was a friend of and an influence on his famous brother-in-law. His untimely death at age fifty-eight and the overshadowing

events of what Wecter rightly named “the downward spiral” contributed to the faded record.

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Katie Leary: “She’s always there ...”

by Robert E. Agan

Published in the Mark Twain Society Bulletin (Vol. II, No. 2), June, 1979, pp. 1-6, this article was adapted from a research project conducted under an independent contract study with Empire State College. At the time, Robert E. Agan was Vice President of Personnel at Hardinge Brothers, Elmira.

Of the many servants employed by the family of Mark Twain over the years, none had as close a relationship as Katie Leary from Elmira. From the time she joined the Clemens household in 1880 until Mark Twain’s death in 1910 she shared the family’s years of happiness and its times of deepest sorrow. It was Katie who nursed Susy in her fatal illness when the rest of the family was abroad, who was with Livy when she died in Florence, who had the responsibility of telling Mark Twain the news

of Jean’s tragic death and who was present to help comfort Clara when the end came for Mark Twain himself. In sunnier days she helped to care for Livy and the children during the summers at Quarry Farm, travelled with them in Europe, and even acted as go-between in the courtship of Clara and Ossip Gabrilowitsch. The association of Katie Leary and the family of Samuel L. Clemens was recorded by Mary Lawton, a friend of Clara’s, and was published in 1925 as *A Lifetime With Mark Twain*. Although the book is a delightful collection of anecdotes revealing much about Mark Twain’s personality and family life, the image of Katie Leary that emerged was that of an uneducated, rather naive, small town Irish Catholic girl, almost a stereotype of the Irish maid. With the focus on Mark Twain and his family, Katie Leary was important to Mary Lawton only as a narrator and the book was written in a folksy, ungrammatical style, purportedly as dictated by Katie herself.

What Mary Lawton did not see, or more probably ignored, was the effect of the years of association with the Clemens family, their friends and guests; of travel and reading, supervised in part by Olivia Clemens herself, on an intelligent, keen-witted woman. The mature Katie Leary was a self-educated woman of much greater sophistication than Mary Lawton chose to indicate. When the book was published members of Katie Leary’s family and friends who knew her well complained of the portraiture. Her niece, Marguerite Leary Conway, commented, “although she had no formal education beyond age fourteen, she was a remarkable person. She was a very intelligent woman who had experienced so much in the thirty years in the Clemens household. Her grammar may have included ‘ain’ts’ and a double negative now and then, but she did not speak in the vernacular as recorded by Mary Lawton. Many people who knew my aunt and enjoyed her stories of the Clemens family, urged us to protest, but my brother and I decided we were the only ones concerned, so we did nothing about it.”

Mary Lawton indicated that she had interviewed Katie in Elmira and she did visit Katie in her Elmira home a couple of times for preliminary interviews. The actual dictation of the memoirs, however, was conducted in Katie’s niece’s apartment in New York City over a period of two weeks.

Katie Leary is interesting for more than her association with Mark Twain. She and her family illustrate the American immigrant success story, a familiar story in general yet one that is worth retelling. Katie’s father and mother were born in Ireland; her father, Fenton Leary,

in 1821 and her mother, Margaret Connelly, in 1828. They were married there in the 1840s, the famine years. The poverty of Ireland that spurred the mass exodus to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, led Fenton Leary to come to America. Elmira, a small town with opportunities for employment in the saw mills, on the Chemung Canal or railroads, attracted its share of the Irish immigrants. In 1855, with a population of 8,486, Elmira had 1,192 Irish-born inhabitants or 14% of its total population. In 1848, the cornerstone of St. Peter and Paul's Church, the first Roman Catholic church in Elmira, was laid.

Two Connellys, brother-in-laws of Fenton Leary, preceded him to Elmira where they bought land on the South Side of town. The present Connelly Avenue got its name from the Connelly family tract. About 1851, Fenton Leary helped build his own home at 103 Connelly Avenue. As was common for immigrant families, Fenton Leary made the trip to America alone and was joined later by his wife and son, Bartholomew, born in Ireland. He worked as a day laborer but was able to save enough to build his own home and buy a ten-plot cemetery lot in Saints Peter and Paul's Cemetery in 1853. The cost of the latter was \$12.56.

Fenton and Margaret Leary had four children born in Elmira: Mary, born in 1862; Catherine (Katie), born on March 17, 1856; Dennis, born in 1857; and Margaret, born in 1867. All five children of the second generation of the family in America moved upward on the socio-economic scale. Bartholomew who never married and lived all of his life in the family home on Connelly Avenue, earned his living as a mason. As was a common practice in Irish families, he changed his name to O'Leary, which means "the son of Leary." He died in 1889. The youngest daughter, Margaret also died young. She worked as a dressmaker before her death at the age of nineteen in 1888.

Fenton Leary, himself, died in 1898. His obituary in the *Elmira Star-Gazette* read, "Fenton Leary, an old and respected resident of Elmira, surrounded by his wife and family, passed peacefully away at his residence at 103 Connelly Avenue at 7:00 p.m. last night. [March 31, 1898] Besides his wife, he leaves three children—Mary, Catherine and Dennis. The funeral will be held Friday at 9:00 a.m., from the residence and at 10:00 a.m. from St. Mary's Church. Interment will be at St. Peter and Paul's Cemetery." In November of the same year, Katie's younger brother, Dennis, joined his father in the family plot in St. Peter and Paul's Cemetery. He had worked as a mason until the 1890s when he operated a tavern on Main Street. He was the only one of the five children

to marry and when he died at the age of forty-one, he left a widow and two small children. His mother, Margaret Connelly Leary died in 1899.

Katie's sister, Mary, never married and worked as a domestic. For many years she was a live-in maid at the Langdon family mansion at 302 Main Street, working for Olivia Clemens' sister-in-law, Mrs. Charles J. Langdon. After 1900 she lived in the family home on Connelly Avenue and later lived with Katie, both in New York and in Elmira. She died in 1928.

The story of Katie Leary's thirty years with the Clemens family is familiar to those interested in Mark Twain through the book, *A Lifetime with Mark Twain*. Her life in the twenty-four years after the death of Mark Twain was less exciting but one that demonstrated her good taste, her sound business judgment and her love of family. After Mark Twain died in 1910, Katie Leary helped Clara, who was living in Europe, settle things at Stormfield. During her employment with the Clemens family, Katie had lived in New York City on several occasions and she decided to resettle there. Mark Twain left her \$10,000 in his will and she received a monthly check from Clara as long as she lived. She also owned the family home on Connelly Avenue in Elmira. She was financially secure herself and was able to help her sister, sister-in-law and niece and nephew.

Katie rented a large house at 37 West 97th Street, New York City. She invited her sister, Mary, her sister-in-law, Katherine, and the two children of Dennis and Katherine, Marguerite and Warren Leary, to live with her. She also took in boarders. The house consisted of a basement containing a kitchen and dining room, a first floor with a large sitting room and Katie's bedroom, and a second and third floor each with four bedrooms. Katie had a reputation as an excellent manager and often had weekend guests from Elmira staying with her. Elmira families would have their children live in Katie's boarding house while attending college in New York. One such student boarder remembers that Katie acted like a mother to her boarders, supervising their studies and always knowing where they were.

Katie's nephew and niece, the third generation of the Leary family in America, were both college graduates. Warren Leary graduated from Columbia School of Journalism in 1916. He eventually settled in Rice Lake, Wisconsin where he was the owner and publisher of the *Rice Lake Chronotype* until his death in 1958. He grew up with Katie's stories about Mark Twain and inherited the complete set of autographed first editions of Mark Twain's works inscribed to his aunt. These books,

a letter of recommendation that Katie secured for her nephew, signed “S.L. Clemens (Mark Twain)”, and a brass paperweight comprised of five bloodhounds that belonged to Mark Twain now belong to Warren Leary, Jr. who succeeded his father as publisher of the *Rice Lake Chronotype*.

Marguerite Leary graduated from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn in 1917 and was a home economics teacher in one of the New York City schools. She married James Conway in 1929. She remembers meeting Mark Twain in the Elmira railroad station in 1902. He was in Elmira for the wedding of his niece, Julia Langdon, to Edward Loomis. Marguerite Leary still remembers vividly the wintry day, it was November, when the seven-year-old girl shyly shook the hand of the white mustached man in a long furlined coat with his white hair covered by a fur hat. She recalled, “I remember he tipped my chin up and said, ‘My but you are a funny looking little girl with those green eyes’.”

The next time she saw him was eight years later as he lay in his coffin in the Langdon house in Elmira. “Aunt Katy insisted that I just had to touch Mark Twain’s brow,” she recalled with a small shudder. “It frightened me. He was the first dead person I had ever seen.” A more pleasant memory and a treasured memento is a copy of *The Prince and the Pauper* that she found with her presents under the Christmas tree in 1900. It was inscribed, “To Marguerite Leary, with kindest regards of the author. Always do right when it’s convenient. Truly yours, Mark Twain.”

Katie Leary continued to run her boarding house in New York until 1922 when she and her sister decided to return to the family home on Connelly Avenue in Elmira. After her sister’s death in 1928, Katie made her will which she signed in June, 1929. After paying her debts and funeral expenses, her estate was to go to her niece and nephew. She died in Elmira on October 5, 1934 and was buried with the other members of her family in Ss. Peter and Paul’s Cemetery. There is no stone marking the grave. The house survived until the flood of 1972. The lot is now part of a city park and playground, as yet unnamed. It would be appropriate to call it Katie Leary Park after the Elmira woman who was both servant and friend to the family of one of America’s greatest writers.

Her obituary in the *Elmira Star-Gazette* summarized her life. “Miss Catherine Leary, 103 Connelly Avenue, whose reminiscences of 30 years with the family of Mark Twain were published in book form, died Friday at 4 a.m. She was 78 years old ... Miss Leary became a member of the Clemens household 10 years after the marriage of Samuel Clemens and Miss Langdon. She remained with them through the deaths

of Mrs. Clemens, Susy, Jean, and was at Mark Twain's bedside with his only remaining daughter, Mrs. Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch, when the humorist died in 1910. An expert seamstress, Miss Leary was engaged by Mrs. Clemens to make the children's clothing and remained with them for 30 years. She accompanied them in their foreign travels and Mark Twain once said of her, "Why, Katy is like the paper on the walls, she's always there ..."

Notes

The spelling "Katie" is the same as the signature on her will, "Katie Leary." The typed portion of the will refers to "Katherine Leary," although she seems to have been baptised as "Catherine." Mary Lawton used the spelling "Katy."

Although Katie told Mary Lawton she was seventeen years old when she went to work for the Clemens family, church records and her death certificate give her date of birth as March 17, 1856 which would mean she was actually twenty-four in 1880.

[Katy Leary Park was dedicated on November 2, 1990. Katherine Leary Antenne, great granddaughter of Katy Leary, unveiled the commemorative marker. The Park is located at Connelly and River Streets in Elmira, NY.]

The True Story of Auntie Cord

by Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr.

Published in the Mark Twain Society Bulletin (Vol. IV, No. 2), June, 1981, pp. 1-5, this article was written in response to a query from actress Pauline Myers for information about the "Aunt Rachel" of Mark Twain's well-known story, a character portrayed by Miss Myers in her prize-winning one-woman show. At the time, Dr. Wisbey was co-editor of the Mark Twain Society Bulletin.

None of Mark Twain's published writings is as closely associated with Elmira as "A True Story, Word for Word as I Heard It," first published in the November, 1874, *Atlantic Monthly*. Not only was it written

in Elmira but it is based on a family story shared with Mark Twain by an Elmira resident. In it, Mark Twain is revealed as an early practitioner of oral history, family history, women's history and black history—all in the same work.

"It was summer time, and twilight. We were sitting on a porch on the farm-house, on the summit of the hill, and 'Aunt Rachel' was sitting respectfully below our level, on the steps—for she was our servant, and colored." Thus Mark Twain began his account of the story. The setting was Quarry Farm and "Aunt Rachel" was Mary Ann Cord, known as Auntie Cord, the cook for Theodore and Susan Crane. Mark Twain thought her to be sixty years old, but according to family records she was actually seventy-six when she told the story of her life to Mark Twain.

The story illustrates Mark Twain's exceptional memory and his incomparable talent for recording dialects. Unlike other contemporary writers who tried to imitate accents, Mark Twain was able to catch the authentic sound of the narrator's speech without resorting to the kind of bizarre spelling that makes Artemus Ward or Marietta Holley almost impossible for modern readers to comprehend. "Aunt Rachel" of the story was born in slavery in Maryland, raised in Virginia and then separated from her husband and seven children when they were all sold about 1852. The youngest, named Henry, had a scar on his wrist and another on the top of his forehead. When he was torn away from his mother he whispered, "I gwine to run away, an' den I work and buy your freedom." The narrator never saw her husband or any of her other children again.

Her new master took her to New Bern, North Carolina, where she was a cook on his plantation. When the Civil War came along he was a colonel in the Confederate army, and after the war the house was occupied by Union troops. "Aunt Rachel" continued to cook for the Union officers and was in charge of the kitchen. When a regiment of black troops invaded her kitchen and staged an impromptu party she lost her temper and called them down with an old expression of her mother's that she had often used. "I wa'n't bawn in de mash to be fool' by trash! I's one o' de ole Blue Hen's Chickens, I is!" One of the young black soldiers seemed startled by the expression, and after puzzling about it for the night he came back the next morning. It was her son Henry, thirteen years older but still carrying the identifying scars on his wrist and forehead. It was a moving story as Mark Twain recorded it; an almost impossible coincidence. Its publication in the *Atlantic Monthly* was Mark

Twain's first article in that prestigious journal, and the story was later reprinted in *Sketches New and Old*, published in 1875.

Incredible as are the events that Mark Twain recorded, the story is indeed a true one and it still exists in the oral tradition handed down from generation to generation in the family of Mary Cord. A version of the story was told recently by her great grandson who heard it many times from his own mother and grandfather, the Henry in Mark Twain's account. The two versions differ slightly in some details but both confirm the same remarkable coincidence.

Mary Ann Cord, like "Aunt Rachel," was born in Maryland, grew up in Virginia and was sold to a plantation owner in North Carolina where her son discovered her after the Civil War. His name was Henry and he took the surname Washington after he followed the North Star to escape from slavery in 1858, when he was about thirteen years old. As his grandson observed, slaves didn't have last names and usually went by the names of their masters but Henry rejected that idea. He had reached Elmira and was sitting by the Erie Railroad platform when the man who ran the barbershop in the Rathbun Hotel befriended him, gave him a home and taught him how to barber. Henry became a skilled barber and practiced this trade in Elmira but he did not forget his mother still living in slavery somewhere in the South.

According to the family story, he went South several times looking for his mother. When they were separated in Virginia, he had put a ring on her finger and told her not to take it off. He carried a distinctive scar on his forehead from a bad cut in an accident as a young child. When the Civil War broke out, Henry enlisted in Elmira and went south as a Union soldier. His version of his reunion with his mother, as told by his grandson, is similar to that told to Mark Twain but differs in some details. When the war was over, Henry was in North Carolina in the town of Burn or Burns, a phonetic version of New Bern. Some of the boys "was raising sand" in a big house when they made the woman in charge of the kitchen mad and she told them to get out of the house. The soldiers wanted to tear the place apart but Henry talked them out of it. He came back for breakfast the next morning and as the woman was setting it on the table he had a strange feeling that something wasn't just right. He had a habit of brushing back his hair (demonstrated by the story teller). He did it all his life. As he brushed back his hair, he revealed the scar on his forehead just as Mary brought his breakfast. When she saw the scar she fainted and then he saw the ring on her finger. And

“that’s how he found his mother” in North Carolina, years after he left her in Virginia. Henry brought his mother back to Elmira where the remarkable story of their reunion was told again and again.

In spite of a search by the family, no record of Henry’s military service was found and he never received any veteran’s benefits. He was a successful barber in Elmira, working in a hotel and later at his own shop on Water Street across from John Arnot’s bank. The building that housed the barber shop is no longer there, but the old Chemung Canal Bank building, once John Arnot’s bank, is now the home of the Chemung County Historical Society. The biggest men in Elmira, John Arnot, the Langdons and Mark Twain himself, were among his customers and had their own shaving mugs in a rack in the barber shop. When Henry Washington died, on Washington’s birthday in 1927, at the age of eighty-two, he was the oldest barber in Elmira.

In Elmira, Mary Ann married Primus Cord, a widower and homeowner who had lived in Elmira for many years as a member of Elmira’s black community. Auntie Cord, as she was called, went to work as a cook at Quarry Farm where she met Mark Twain in the spring of 1874. Albert Bigelow Paine included some comments about Auntie Cord in his official biography of Mark Twain published in 1912. Paine worked closely with Mark Twain in his last years and had access to his papers. His attitude and his writing style are definitely dated but the information he presents must be based on written sources or oral stories from Mark Twain. Paine, who calls “A True Story” “a little masterpiece,” confirms that Mark Twain was especially pleased with it and delighted to have it published in the *Atlantic Monthly* which had rejected earlier contributions. Paine continued:

He wished to do more with Auntie Cord and her associates of the farm, for they were extraordinarily interesting. Two other negroes on the place, John Lewis and his wife ... were not always on terms of amity with Auntie Cord. They disagreed on religion, and there were frequent battles in the kitchen. These depressed the mistress of the house, but they gave only joy to Mark Twain. His Southern raising had given him an understanding of their humors, their native emotions which made these riots a spiri-

tual gratification. He would slip around among the shrubbery and listen to the noise and strife of battle, and hug himself with delight. Sometimes they resorted to missiles—stones, tinware—even dressed poultry which Auntie Cord was preparing for the oven. Lewis was very black, Auntie Cord was a bright mulatto, Lewis's wife several shades lighter. Wherever the discussion began it promptly shaded off toward the color line and insult. Auntie Cord was a Methodist; Lewis was a Dunkard. Auntie Cord was ignorant and dogmatic; Lewis could read and was intelligent. Theology invariably led to personality, and eventually to epithets, crockery, geology, and victuals. How the greatest joker of the age did enjoy that summer warfare!

Auntie Cord died in Elmira on January 1, 1888. Her obituary in the *Elmira Daily Advertiser* read:

Death of An Aged Colored Lady. Mrs. Mary Ann Cord, aged eighty years, died at the residence of her son, Henry Washington, at 658 Dickinson Street yesterday afternoon. She was a slave part of her life, and born in Green Vale, Maryland. She was brought to Elmira by her son, and lived at various times with the families of Colonel Foster, General Diven, and Theodore Crane, where she was very kindly regarded. The funeral will be held tomorrow afternoon.

The funeral was reported in the next day's paper.

The funeral of Mrs. Mary Ann Cord, who died on Sunday at the age of eighty years, was held yesterday afternoon in Bethel church. The deceased was greatly regarded by the colored residents of the community, and the church was

crowded with mourners. The Rev. Mr. Becket conducted the services, and the remains were laid in their final resting place in Woodlawn.

It is interesting that Auntie Cord and her family are buried in the same cemetery as Mark Twain and his family. According to family records, the newspaper accounts of her age at the time of death are in error, and she was actually ninety when she died. Her dates on the Washington family stone in Woodlawn Cemetery are "1798 - 1888." A family story indicates that her life was shortened by an accident at Quarry Farm when, in the dead of night, she fell into a well that was being dug and "never got over it."

Certainly her descendents were long lived. Her son, Henry Washington died at eighty-two, but his daughter, Louise (or Louisa) Florence Condol, lived to be one hundred and four, keeping a keen mind and good memory as long as she lived. Born in Elmira in 1868, she often visited Quarry Farm when her grandmother worked there and as a child played with the Clemens girls. She kept up a correspondence with Clara Clemens Gabilowitsch after Mark Twain's death. Her husband, William Condol, was from a family with deep roots in the Elmira's black community. She died on August 30, 1972, and she too is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Mrs. Condol treasured a copy of the first edition of Mark Twain's *Sketches New and Old*, presented to her grandmother with the following inscription: The author of this book offers it to Aunty Cord with his kindest regards and refers her to page 202 for a well-meant but libelous portrait of herself and also the bit of personal history which she recounted to him once at Quarry Farm. Samuel L. Clemens Mark Twain Hartford, Nov. 18, 1875

This book is now in the possession of Mrs. Condol's oldest son, Leon W. Condol of Silver Spring, Maryland. Mark Twain evidently inscribed another copy of the same book and presented it to John Lewis. This copy was recently given to the Mark Twain Memorial in Hartford by Jervis Langdon.

The Cord-Washington-Condol family stories are presently preserved in the bright memory of William Condol of Elmira who was born here on November 9, 1892, and still lives in the city. He knew his great grandmother Cord only through the family stories but he was well acquainted with his grandfather, Henry Washington, and was devoted to his mother, visiting her every day during her last years in the County Infirmary. He was seventeen when Mark Twain was buried in Elmira and remembers clearly attending the funeral on that “cold, drizzly day in April,” 1910. William’s brother Leon, who is five years older than he, has the family pictures and mementoes. In four generations, this family covers nearly two hundred years of American history from the late eighteenth century and the sad days of slavery to the present. The remarkable story of this family is known because the lives of Mary Ann Cord and Mark Twain converged on a summer evening at Quarry Farm in 1874.

John T. Lewis

Mark Twain’s Friend in Elmira

by Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr.

Published in the Mark Twain Society Bulletin (Vol. VII, No. 1), January, 1984, pp. 1-5, this article was written in the year marking the centennial of the publication of the English edition of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. At the time, Dr. Wisbey was co-editor of the Mark Twain Society Bulletin, Professor of History, Elmira College Archivist, and Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies.

When John T. Lewis died in 1906, both of the Elmira newspapers commented in his obituary story that he was one of the first persons Mark Twain asked about when he came to Elmira on his annual visits. The two men had their picture taken together in 1903, the last full summer that the author spent at Quarry Farm, the author in his familiar white suit beside the stooped figure of the white haired Negro. Their friendship went back to 1877 when Lewis saved the lives of Mark Twain’s sister-in-law, her young daughter and the daughter’s nurse by stopping

their runaway horse. Mark Twain never forgot the incident and although the event was not publicized at the time the whole city eventually came to know of the act of heroism.

The story was a dramatic one and could have been sent off for publication at a good price, but on this occasion the author did not want to see his story in print. Instead, “to make a sort of record,” as he said, he recounted the tale in a letter to his friend, William Dean Howells. The letter was first printed in its entirety in 1917 in the collection of Mark Twain’s letters edited by Albert Bigelow Paine and has been reprinted several times in various places such as *Mark Twain in Elmira* by Jerome and Wisbey.¹

According to Paine, Howells thought the story was “one of the most impressive things he had ever read.” He urged Clemens to write it up for publication. Clemens replied, “My dear Howells,—I really don’t see how the story of the runaway horse could read well with the little details of names and places and things left out. *They* are the true life of all narrative. It wouldn’t quite do to print them at this time Delicacy—a sad, false delicacy—robs literature of the best two things among its belongings. Family-circle narrative and obscene stories. But no matter; in that better world which I trust we are all going to I have the hope and belief that they will not be denied to us.”²

The story is too familiar to repeat in great detail but should be summarized as part of the John T. Lewis story. Charles Langdon’s wife, Ida was driving her daughter, six-year-old Julia, and Nora, the nurse, down the steep hill from Quarry Farm to Elmira when the horse began to run away, plunging down the hill. The people at the farm house could do nothing but look on in horror, but coming up the hill was John T. Lewis with his heavy farm wagon loaded with manure. Lewis turned his wagon across the road, jumped down, and as the terrified horse raced down the hill, grabbed the bridle and brought him to a halt only a few yards before the road made a sharp turn by a deep gully. If Lewis had failed to stop the horse he would have been thrown with them into the ravine and all killed.

The reality of the danger to all concerned can be illustrated by two news stories in the *Elmira Daily Advertiser* on successive days after the incident. One of these described a woman who was thrown from the carriage of a runaway horse and seriously injured. The other told of a man who was trying to stop a runaway horse and was kicked to death. There was no doubt in anyone’s mind that John T. Lewis had put him-

self in real danger and that his heroism had prevented an almost certain tragedy. The family showed its appreciation in many ways. Lewis received gifts of money, a fine watch, and autographed copies of Mark Twain’s books. One of these, *Sketches New and Old*, inscribed “To John T. Lewis from Mark Twain—Elmira, Aug. 24, 1877.” is in the collection of the Mark Twain Memorial in Hartford. The family’s appreciation of John T. Lewis and Mark Twain’s friendship and support continued as long as Lewis lived.

Although nothing about the incident appeared in the Elmira newspapers at the time, word of Lewis’s heroism and improved fortunes soon spread around town. Lewis was hardworking and modest and lived simply with his wife and daughter on a marginal farm on East Hill. In religion he was a Dunkard, the only one of that sect anywhere around. He liked to read and, according to Mark Twain, was ready to argue theological questions. Paine quotes a description of some of the arguments between Lewis and Auntie Cord, the Quarry Farm cook. “Lewis was very black. Auntie Cord was a bright mulatto. Lewis’s wife was several shades lighter. Whenever the discussion began it shaded off toward the color line and insult. Auntie Cord was a Methodist; Lewis was a Dunkard. Auntie Cord was ignorant and dogmatic; Lewis could read and was intelligent. Theology invariably led to personality, and eventually to epithets, crockery, geology, and victuals.”³

Mark Twain was delighted with such religious disputation. At the time of the runaway horse incident, he wrote that Auntie Cord declared— “‘Now let folks go on saying there ain’t no God! Lewis, the Lord sent you there to stop that horse.’ Says Lewis—‘Then who sent the *horse* there in sich a shape?’”⁴

The Dunkards or German Baptist Brethren came to America in the early 18th century. The Brethren, as they were known, had no formal creed aside from the New Testament, believed in adult baptism, non-resistance to evil including war, and opposed taking oaths. They were against slavery.⁵ Lewis was evidently a free black, although it is not clear if he was born free or gained his freedom later. The facts of his life were recorded in a spiritual autobiography that he wrote just before he died to be read at his funeral. “I, John T. Lewis, was born in Carroll County, Maryland, Jan. 10, 1835. I joined the Brethren church in Pipe Creek congregation in the fall of 1853. I was baptized at Meadow Branch meetinghouse by Eld. Philip Boyl and went from there to Beaverdam church by letter in 1856. From there, I went to Marsh Creek in 1860. I came to

New York State in 1862, since which time I have been cut off from the church. I have tried to live faithful to the New Testament and order of the Brethren. Though separated from them here, I hope to meet them above, where parting will be no more. When I am gone, if no brother can be obtained to preach my funeral, I request to be laid away without any ceremony, as I recognize none as true Christians who refuse to teach the whole Gospel. Jesus said, 'My sheep hear my voice, and another shepherd will they not follow.'"⁶

In 1896, when Lewis was the executor of a will, a project that involved him in paper work for two years even though the estate was very small, he was true to Dunkard principles. He petitioned that "he had conscientious scruples against taking an oath, or legal obligation by agreeing to "solemnly sincerely and truly declare and affirm." The deceased, Emily Johnson, died on March 8, 1896 and the estate was not settled finally until June 29, 1898.⁷

John T. Lewis's Dunkard faith brought him the opportunity to restore an old Bible "liberated" by Union soldiers from a Brethren Church during the Civil War. The story was publicized in a periodical called *Inglenook*. "After the battle of Antietam, Sept. 7, 1862, a well put up Bible was taken from the Brethren church, Sharpsburg, Md., by a couple of the soldiers of the 107th New York Regiment, who took part in the battle. The Bible was taken to New York and for many years kept as a souvenir of the struggle at Antietam. At a reunion of the veterans of the regiment, held in Elmira, a few years ago, it became known that the lost Dunker Bible was in the keeping of the widow of a captain of one of the companies, and that there was a desire to have it returned to the old church from which it had been taken more than forty years before. Money was raised to purchase the book of the widow. It was then passed over to the care of Bro. Jno. T. Lewis, a colored member of the Brethren church, residing at East Hill, Elmira. Brother Lewis by the aid of the almanac secured the name of the elder at Sharpsburg, communicated with him, and in due time the lost Bible was restored to its place in the old church."⁸

Mark Twain not only visited Lewis when he was in Elmira, but he received news of him through family letters from Susan Crane, his sister-in-law, who lived at Quarry Farm. In a letter from Mrs. Crane to Olivia Langdon Clemens dated December 19, 1886, she wrote, "I wonder how Mr. Clemens came to think of sending the *Century* to Lewis. Before we had an opportunity to tell him in accordance with Mr. Clemens re-

quest, Mary [Mrs. Lewis] came to ask if we knew anything of a No [issue] being sent to Lewis & if so who sent it? Or if we did not should Lewis return it as it might not be for him since the T. was left out and name stood simple John Lewis. He was greatly pleased because he so wished to read the Life of Lincoln which *we* find very interesting. [The classic biography by John G. Nicolay and John Hay ran in serial form in the *Century Magazine* from November, 1886, to 1889]. Lewis does not know whom he is to thank, but is grateful I am sure having bought the Oct No & longed for the rest. I should not have thought of that for him.”⁹

Mark Twain also arranged for Lewis to receive a small pension distributed by Susan Crane, to which his wealthy friend, Henry H. Rogers contributed. In a letter to Twain dated January 6, 1902 [possibly misdated and should be 1903], Susan Crane wrote, “Lewis in his picturesque garments called an hour ago, with the enclosed note and receipt. When I handed him the second \$10.00 he exclaimed *‘Oh Lord!’ (*Reverently as in prayer) and after a short call, he went down the hill with a shining face, the old anxious expression all gone. When he received the first \$10.00 from your ‘friend,’ he could not dare to believe what I said, that bills of that denomination would come until Spring. So the expression was a mingled surprise & thanksgiving”¹⁰

Later Susan Crane wrote, “I want to tell you what Lewis did with some of his money received from you, Mr. Rogers & me. This was all the money he had for the winter except about \$60.00 for two cows fattened for beef. He paid what was due the man who worked for him last summer—and the \$30.00 note on which I was the endorser. To pay these debts seemed a joy to him, and he told me the other day that he should have suffered real want but for the help which came through ‘all this kindness.’ Lewis is appreciative and is helped ...” On the side of the letter in Mark Twain’s hand is a note, “Dear Mrs. Rogers: You know there is a Lewis, if Mr. Rogers could be approached with the evidences by somebody whom he does not regard as a professional. SLC”¹¹

Twain evidently interceded on behalf of Lewis with Rogers on yet another occasion in a letter from Florence, Italy dated 16-18 December 1903 and printed in *Mark Twain’s Correspondence with Henry Huttleston Rogers 1893-1909* Edited by Lewis Leary, University of California Press, 1969, pp. 545-6.

Susan Crane made another report about Lewis in an undated portion of a letter preserved in the Mark Twain Papers with an estimated date of January 1, 1903. She wrote, “Just before your letter of Monday

29 came I was full of an interview with Lewis, who came with a basket of pears and apples for my New Years. We talked by the dining room fire and when I handed him two fives, with the statement that a friend of yours, who did not wish to be known would send you that sum for him every month, I could hardly make him believe it. He asked many questions, asked if I was sure, when fully convinced, his face was very bright and happy.

“The material financial help seems very great to him, but even greater is the indication of confidence in him on your part. Lewis studies and studies and can not see how such good fortune has come to him. Among other things he recounted an experience he had in acting as executor of a blind old colored woman, who left a little house which Theodore [Theodore Crane, her husband] helped her to save. Lewis had considerable trouble in paying claims, and satisfying heirs, spending much time, but receiving nothing for his troubles, save the consciousness of having administered honestly on the estate of a blind old woman who was sometimes unreasonable to him. He said, ‘I didn’t get any pay for doing what I did for Emily Johnson, and now all this has come to me.’ ‘then the Langdon family must think me honest, or they wouldn’t treat me so.’”¹²

Mrs. Crane reported that Lewis was able to cash his check at the bank without identification and added, “You and Mr. Rogers have done many good and kindly things with money, but I doubt if any sixteen dollars anywhere have lifted as heavy a load as this same sixteen.”¹³

Mark Twain’s friendship for John T. Lewis was not confined to concern for his financial needs. When *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*, most of which was written at Quarry Farm, was published in 1889, Mark Twain gave Lewis a copy. Lewis carefully wrote in his name and added “compliments of Mr. S. L. Clemens for presant Dec 25th 1889.” The two men were photographed together in several poses in 1903, the last full summer that Mark Twain spent at Quarry Farm.

Lewis was married to Mary A. Stover on July 27, 1865. She too seems to have worked at Quarry Farm. She died on June 20, 1894. Their only son died as an infant. A daughter, Susanna Alice or Susan, survived both parents and died in 1923. Their home was a farm known as the Manning place less than a mile past Quarry Farm on East Hill.

John T. Lewis himself died on July 23, 1906 in an ambulance on the way to the hospital at the age of seventy-one. The *Elmira Gazette and Free Press* carried the story with a headline “JOHN T. LEWIS, COL-

ORED HERO, DIES ON WAY TO HOSPITAL. Mark Twain’s Warm Friend and the Man who Saved the Lives of Mrs. Charles J. Langdon and Mrs. E. E. Loomis Passes Away in Ambulance—Only Dunkard in Vicinity.” The *Elmira Daily Advertiser* carried a similar story with a prominent headline.¹⁴

Lewis suffered from dropsy for some months before his death and hoped to have a Dunkard elder come to Elmira for his funeral. The man who planned to come was in Iowa at the time of his death and another person who was to take his place was not reached in time when the telegram announcing his death was delayed. John T. Lewis was buried beside his wife in Woodlawn Cemetery with only a simple service conducted by the undertaker. His grave, which is not marked by a stone, is not far from that of Auntie Cord, his fellow worker at Quarry Farm. In another section of the same cemetery are the graves of his friend Mark Twain and the members of the Langdon family with whose lives his life was so firmly intertwined by a single act of bravery.

A clipping of an obituary of John T. Lewis published in a Brethren (Dunkard) periodical, *The Gospel Messenger*, was preserved with the papers of Mark Twain and is in the Twain Collection at the University of California at Berkeley. The article quotes the *Elmira Telegram* in describing Lewis. “He is an interesting and picturesque personage. He is favorably known by all the older residents of Elmira. He is a sturdy old gentleman, with a frank and open countenance, a genial disposition, and an unusual share of intelligence. Certainly he belongs to the ranks of the best citizens of his race.” He is still remembered on East Hill. An older resident of the area recalls that her mother referred to him as “Daddy Lewis.” He is one of several Elmiraans whose lives were changed through an association with Mark Twain.

Notes

¹Albert B. Paine (ed.) *Mark Twain’s Letters* (N.Y. & London: Harper & Brothers, 1917), I, 304-309.

²*Mark Twain’s Letters*, I, 309-310.

³Albert B. Paine, *Mark Twain, A Biography* (N.Y. & London: Harper & Brothers, 1912), II, 515-516.

⁴*Mark Twain’s Letters*, I, 308.

⁵*The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (1909), IV, 24.

⁶*The Gospel Messenger*, September 1, 1906, The Mark Twain Papers, The Bancroft Library.

⁷Surrogate's Records, Chemung County, New York.

⁸*Inglenook*, May 1, 1906, quoted in *The Gospel Messenger*, September 1, 1906, The Mark Twain Papers, The Bancroft Library.

⁹Susan L. Crane to Olivia L. Clemens, December 19, 1886, The Mark Twain Papers, The Bancroft Library.

¹⁰Susan L. Crane to Olivia L. Clemens, January 6, 1902, The Mark Twain Papers, The Bancroft Library.

¹¹Susan L. Crane, undated part of letter, The Mark Twain Papers, The Bancroft Library.

¹²Susan L. Crane to Samuel L. Clemens, January 1, 1903, The Mark Twain Papers, The Bancroft Library.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Elmira Gazette and Free Press*, July 23, 1906. *Elmira Daily Advertiser*, July 24, 1906.

Ernest Koppe

Sixty Years at Quarry Farm

by Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr.

Published in the Mark Twain Society Bulletin (Vol. X, No. 2), July, 1987, pp. 3-4. At the time, Dr. Wisbey was co-editor of the Mark Twain Society Bulletin, Professor of History, Elmira College Archivist, and Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies.

Quarry Farm is well known as the place that stimulated Mark Twain's best writing during his summer sojourns there. Even today, visitors note the strange combination of tranquility and stimulation that inspired the author. The Clemens family visits spanned a period of more than thirty years, but its year-round residents have had a remarkable longevity. It was the home of Susan Langdon Crane for fifty-four years and, after her death, Eleanor Sayles Langdon lived there for another forty-six years. Longest of all the residents, however, was a man who served the Langdon family as man of all work and gardener from the time of the

Clemens family visits for some sixty years. The story of Ernest Koppe is an important chapter in the history of Quarry Farm.

The story begins in Berlin in the winter of 1891-1892. The Clemens family, Sam and Livy, Susy, Clara and Jean, and Livy’s sister, Susan Crane, were living there in a hotel. As told in Edith Salsbury’s book, *Susy and Mark Twain*,

A young German waiter named Ernest Koppe was assigned by the hotel to serve them in their apartment. Ernest spoke English and French; he was particularly helpful to Sue Crane who spoke no German, as an interpreter. The whole family became very attached to Ernest, and Sue told him that if he ever came to America, he should come to Elmira, to Quarry Farm, to work for her.

The same story lives in the Langdon family oral tradition in some slightly different versions. In one, the incident takes place in the Alden Hotel and it is Charles J. Langdon who gives the young German waiter his card with the comment that he should look him up if he ever comes to America. Whoever gave young Ernest the invitation, he showed up in Elmira in October, 1892, and went to work at Quarry Farm where he soon made himself indispensable.

He was born in Berlin on April 30, 1869 and christened Gustave Ernst Koppe. Later versions of his name were recorded in various documents as Gustave E. Koeppe, G. Ernest Koppe, and Ernest G. Koppe, although in Elmira he was known as Ernest Koppe. In different sources at different times his occupation was listed as butler, gardener, estate manager, and houseman, but whatever the title he was a jack of all trades with a magical green thumb for both flowers and vegetables.

Ernest did not become a resident at Quarry Farm until near the end of the Clemens family summer visits there. He was settled there in 1895 when Mark Twain and the family spent from May until July preparing for the author’s lecture tour around the world. Livy and Clara accompanied Mark Twain on the tour but Susy and Jean stayed in Elmira with Aunt Sue. Jean attended Park Place School but Susy became bored and left for New York. She died of spinal meningitis at the family home in Hartford in August, 1896 and was brought back to Elmira for burial.

Ernest was well established at Quarry Farm in 1903, the last full summer the Clemens family spent there. A number of pictures of Mark Twain were taken at various places at the farm that summer including some with John T. Lewis, the hero farm laborer. No pictures of Ernest survive from that time.

Ernest Koppe's reminiscences of the Clemens family were never recorded although in later years he sometimes talked with visitors and brought wood to the Study to build a fire for guests of the Langdon family. Certainly he shared the family's sorrows when first Susy, then Livy, and finally Jean and Mark Twain himself were brought back to Elmira to be buried in Woodlawn Cemetery. He was completely devoted to Susan Crane, as was everyone who ever knew her, and served her loyally and efficiently throughout her long life.

They shared a love of flowers. It was Susan Crane's special pleasure to furnish the flowers to decorate the altar at Park Church, a task she enjoyed for fifty years. She also sent bouquets to friends and shut-ins. Ernest raised the flowers in outdoor beds east and north of the house and in a small greenhouse on the south side of the horsebarn. When Susan Crane's health and sight failed in her last years, it was Ernest who delivered and arranged the flowers for her.

He seemed to be able to grow anything—vegetables as well as flowers. He was famous for his strawberries and grew the only celery in the area. The strawberry and celery beds were located with the rhubarb, east of the house across the road. The asparagus and other vegetables grew in the area north of the house and in back of and beside the horse barn. The soil is still rich there today. In the fall, the cellar of the horse barn would be filled with home-grown potatoes, onions and apples, stored for the winter.

Ernest was a slight man, probably not more than 5'4" tall. Most of his time was spent working in the gardens and his uniform there was bib overalls. Occasionally he would act as butler when Mr. and Mrs. Jervis Langdon entertained. He spoke with a slight German accent and had a beautiful tenor singing voice. Soon after coming to Quarry Farm he joined the German Protestant Evangelical Church in Elmira where he sang in the choir. Here he met Anna Vetter and the two were married on October 14, 1903. Annie, as she was known, was eleven years younger than Ernest who was thirty-three when they were married. Like Ernest, she was a small person. They lived in the apartment that is attached to but separate from the main house at Quarry Farm, still known to mem-

bers of the Langdon family as “Ernest’s house.” Annie sometimes helped in the main house but was not a regular member of the servant staff.

They loved children although they had none of their own. Annie was an excellent cook and visiting Langdon grandchildren found a warm welcome in “Ernest’s house” when they sought to escape the formality of the routine in the main house. Ernest was photographed at the age of eighty-three turning a somersault to entertain year-old Sara Pennock.

When Ernest first came to Quarry Farm, horses were the means of transportation and Ernest took care of the horses. He had some difficulty in making the transition from horses to automobiles. According to the present Jervis Langdon, Ernest never really understood the function of the clutch. He would rev up the engine and release the brake and come shooting out of the barn. Although he could fix almost anything he never developed an affection for the automobile. He became a good enough driver to chauffeur Susan Crane around town and to drive Mollie Cahill, the Irish cook, to early morning mass on Sundays.

Ernest was an American citizen, taking out his first papers soon after coming to Quarry Farm. He never returned to Germany although he had several sisters who lived there and corresponded intermittently with one of them. Indeed, he seldom left Quarry Farm except to go to Elmira. His only recorded excursion was a two or three week trip to Florida in the 1930s to investigate the Florida real estate craze. Like so many others, he lost most of his life savings and never traveled again.

When Susan Crane died in 1924, Ernest continued to live and to work at Quarry Farm for Jervis and Eleanor Sayles Langdon for another thirty years. The gardens were his domain although he was the general caretaker and took a special interest in the Study. He was upset at the minor vandalism that occurred and probably approved when Jervis Langdon had the Study moved to the Elmira College campus in 1952.

Ernest finally retired in 1956 at the age of eighty-six. He and Annie purchased a house at 357 Riverside Avenue in Elmira in February, 1956. He died soon afterwards on June 4, 1956 at the age of eighty-seven. Annie continued to live in the little house, joined by a sister, for another eighteen years. She died on May 2, 1974 at the age of ninety-three. Both are buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Quarry Farm has changed since Ernest Koppe left it more than thirty years ago. Large trees obscure the view from the site of the Study and locust brush has encroached on part of the lawn and garden area. Many of the old fruit trees have fallen victim to heavy snows and winds.

The wild lupin and daisies that he picked for flower bouquets have disappeared as have the strawberry and celery beds. The greenhouse has been gone for years. But much remains the same. The view of Elmira, the Chemung Valley and the hills beyond from the front of the house is still spectacular. One can still watch the storms that sweep up the hill and the brilliant sunsets that so impressed Mark Twain. Ernest's asparagus beds still produce delicious asparagus and transplanted rhubarb plants have grown to gigantic size. Above all, the aura of stability and tranquility remains. It is still, as it was to Mark Twain and to Ernest Koppe, a special place.

Cats at Quarry Farm

by Janice J. Beaty

Published in the Mark Twain Society Bulletin (Vol. VII, No. 2), July, 1984, pp. 1-6. At the time, Dr. Janice Beaty was an Associate Professor of Human Services at Elmira College who had published in the fields of natural history, travel, and children's literature.

"A home without a cat—and a well-fed, well-petted and properly revered cat—may be a perfect home, perhaps, but how can it prove title?"

(The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson)

Mark Twain had a number of such perfect domiciles during his seventy-five years of robust living ... stocked with properly revered cats of all sizes, types and colors to prove title, if need be. For Mark Twain loved his home with the passion of a proper Victorian provider. But more than that, Mark Twain made each one of his homes an extension of himself ... endowed with his energy, infused with his originality, and populated with his cats. For Mark Twain was a "cat man" with few equals in his day or any other. Next to his wife and daughters whom he adored, he loved his cats, and refused to be without them no matter where in the world he happened to live, travel, or vacation.

For about twenty years in the 1870s and 1880s his principal summer vacation retreat was Quarry Farm, his wife's sister's lovely home-

stead, perched on the very top of a hill overlooking the city of Elmira, New York, where Livy's parents lived. There in the two-story rambling farmhouse with its long vine-covered veranda, in the barns and stables and outbuildings, in the fields and pastures and woodlots, and most especially in the little octagon-shaped "pilot house" study built for him by his sister-in-law, Susan Crane, Mark Twain rambled or wrote many of the best and most famous of his books, "... I can write ten chapters in Elmira where I can write one here [in Hartford]," he complained to his wife the summer she decided not to go to Elmira ... "I can't succeed except by getting clear out of the world on top of the mountain at Elmira," (Salsbury, p. 42). And with him of course, were his cats.

Not one. Never just one. There were Fraulein and Motley and Stray Kit and Blatherskite and Sin and Satan and Sour Mash. Or else Abner and Lazy and Buffalo Bill and Soapy Sal and Pestilence and Famine. Many of them resided all year round at Quarry Farm. But the favorites were carried with Mark and his family on their annual summer hegira to East Hill above Elmira, and back again to their principal home in Hartford, Connecticut in the fall.

Mark Twain's captivation with cats all began during his boyhood days in Hannibal, Missouri. He recalls in his *Autobiography* how his mother took in strays: ... "All the race of dumb animals had a friend in her. By some subtle sign the homeless, hunted, bedraggled and disreputable cat recognized her at a glance as the born refuge and champion of his sort—and followed her home. His instinct was right, he was as welcome as the prodigal son. We had nineteen cats at one time in 1845. And there wasn't one that had any merit, except the cheap and tawdry merit of being unfortunate. They were a vast burden to us all—including my mother—but they were out of luck and that was enough; they had to stay. However, better these than no pets at all; children must have pets and we were not allowed to have caged ones. An imprisoned creature was out of the question—my mother would not have allowed a rat to be restrained of its liberty" (Neider, p.29).

So the young Sam Clemens had cat pets ... always at least three. And even back in those early days he was never without his favorite. For two or three months every summer between Sam's eighth and twelfth years, his family vacationed at his Uncle John A. Quarles' farm outside of Florida, Missouri. His cousin Tabitha remembers how it was when Sam arrived: "... father would lift his big carpet bag out of the wagon and

then would come Sam with a basket in his hand. The basket he would allow no one except himself to carry. In the basket would be his pet cat. This he had trained to sit beside himself at the table. He would play contented with a cat for hours” (Smith, p. 244).

It was the same at Quarry Farm, although most of his time was devoted to writing. He would rise at 7:30, breakfast at eight, and retreat to his study to write, “seldom taking anything to eat or drink in the middle of the day” (Clemens, Clara, p. 61). At around five in the afternoon he would walk down to the farm house to play with the children and cats, take them for walks, or “try to make the donkey go.” After dinner he often read aloud to the whole family the writing he had accomplished during the day.

During the summer of 1871, his first at Quarry Farm, he completed *Roughing It*. In 1874 he worked on *Tom Sawyer* using real episodes from his boyhood. Cats figured quite prominently, if you remember. There was Peter, the too-curious cat to whom Tom (Sam) fed the “pain-killer,” the kitten with one eye acquired through Tom’s fence-whitewashing finagling, the dead cat the boys took to the cemetery at midnight to cure warts with, the cat they let down through the scuttle over the school teacher’s head to snatch off his wig, and of course Tom and Huck’s favorite nocturnal signal, the “meow.”

In 1876 he began *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, not to be finished for the next seven summers. Susy, his oldest daughter was four that summer, and Clara, called “Bay” for “baby,” was two. Their contrast in character was evident even at that early age. Twain began keeping a journal of their quaint sayings that summer and noted that Susy, always contemplative and sensitive, was so impressed by a display of fireworks in the city below on Fourth of July, she remarked: “I wish I could sit up all night as God does” (Paine, p. 577).

Bay, on the other hand, was quite matter-of-fact in her approach to life. Mark Twain later recalled that when a pet cat died “Susy deeply reflected as to its life here and hereafter, while Bay was concerned only as to the style of its funeral” (Paine, p. 578).

His youngest daughter Jean was born in Elmira the summer of 1880, and Twain, ever the master wordsmith remarked in a letter to a friend: “... It is curious to note the change in the stock-quotations of the Affection Board brought about by throwing this new security on the market. Four weeks ago the children still put Mama at the head of the list right along, where she had always been. But now:

Jean
 Mama
 Motley] cats
 Fraulein]
 Papa

“That is the way it stands now. Mama is become No. 2; I have dropped from No.4, and am become No.5. Some time ago it used to be nip and tuck between me and the cats, but after the cats ‘developed’ I didn’t stand any more show” (Paine, p. 682).

With Twain for a model, how could his children feel otherwise? Even baby Jean as a toddler was soon bringing cats over to her father. Twain recorded Susy’s comment on this new turn of affairs: “Jean has found out already that mamma loves morals and papa loves cats” (Salsbury, p. 172).

Twain finished *The Prince and the Pauper* that summer and delighted his children with the reading of the pages as he completed them. It was one of their favorites, later to be dramatized by them on Saturday afternoons back in their Hartford home. He also worked on “A Cat Story,” the tale of Catasauqua “and her beautiful family of catlings,” including Cattaraugus, the eldest who was white because he had “high impulses and pure heart,” and Catiline, the youngest, who was black because he had a self-seeking nature and base motives (DeVoto, p. 108).

The tale seems to be based on the impromptu stories he told his children in the living room at Hartford in which, according to the rules, he was supposed to begin with the painting of the cat’s head and proceed around the room, including fifteen pieces of bric-a-brac and three pictures that were on the shelves and mantelpiece in the order that they occurred.

The story was never published during his life, but finally appeared in 1959 in *Concerning Cats: Two Tales by Mark Twain*. It was full of catcalls, catamounts, catalpas, cataracts, and even polecats. But most fascinating to the modern reader may be Mark Twain’s two drawings of cats, crude as they may be. One shows three cats “singing” with the narrative:

“SUSY: Why, Papa, I didn’t know cats could sing.

“Oh, can’t they, though! Well, these could. Cats are packed full of music—just as full as they can hold; and when they die, people remove it from them and sell it to the fiddle makers. Oh, yes indeed. Such is Life...” (DeVoto, 111). The second is a pen-and-ink sketch of a cat that

seems to be lying down and standing up at the same time, although that may not have been his intention. He explains it away as only he could: “ ... just as I had finished the front end of her, she got up and began to gaze passionately at a bird and wriggle her tail in a most expressively wistful way I ought to have laid this one down again, and put a brick or something on her; but I did not think of it at the time. Let us now separate these conflicting passions in this cat, so that you can see each by itself, and the more easily study it. Lay your hand on the picture, to where I have made those dots, and cover the rear, half of it from sight—now you observe how reposeful the front end is. Very well; now lay your hand on the front end and cover it from sight—do you observe the eager wriggle in that tail?—it is a wriggle which only the presence of a bird can inspire” (DeVoto, p. 113).

The summer of 1885 they arrived at Quarry Farm in June and stayed until September. Aunt Sue Crane had a little playhouse built for the girls furnished with tables, chairs, a stove and all. The girls called it “Ellerslie” from a novel they were reading at the time. Susy was 13, Clara 11 and Jean 5. That was the summer Mark Twain discovered that Susy was writing a biography of him. “Papa is very fond of animals particularly of cats, we had a dear little gray kitten once that he named ‘Lazy’ (papa always wears gray to match his hair and eyes) and he would carry him around on his shoulder, it was a mighty pretty sight! The gray cat sound asleep against papa’s coat and hair ...” (Salsbury, p. 208).

Perhaps that was what inspired the girls’ teasing name for their father during his brief but sometimes spectacular fits of temper. Clara says: “We used to call Father the ‘spitting gray kitten’ because in many of his spurts of irritation he kept a soft, fuzzy quality in his demeanor that reminded us of a little kitten with its fur all ruffled. We enjoyed this spectacle and were inclined to inspire it whenever we could. When his performance was ended, we would exclaim, ‘Oh, you bad, spitting gray kitten!’ and he would laugh a gay little laugh and shake his leonine head of gray curls” (Clemens, Clara, p. 84).

Susy, in her biography, makes first mention of one of Mark Twain’s all-time favorite cats, Sour Mash. She was only a kitten in 1885 but already making her presence felt: “There are eleven cats at the farm here now. Papa’s favorite is a little tortoise-shell kitten he has named ‘Sour Mash,’ and a little spotted one ‘Fannie.’ It is very pretty to see what papa calls the cat procession; it was formed in this way. Old Minnie-cat headed, (the mother of all cats) next to her came aunt Susie, then Clara

on the donkey, accompanied by a pile of cats, then papa and Jean hand in hand and a pile of cats brought up in the rear, mama and I made up the audience.” (Salsbury, p. 208).

His wife Livy was frail and often sat on the veranda to watch the antics of her lively brood and their leader. That summer she attempted to teach little Jean some natural history by having her collect insects. Jean, however, was not allowed to kill any. One night at supper Jean ran triumphantly up to her mother with a plate full of dead flies. Susy records the scene: “Mamma thanked Jean very enthusiastically although she with difficulty concealed her amusement. Just then Sour Mash entered the room and Jean believing her hungry asked Mama for permission to give the flies. Mamma laughingly consented and the flies almost immediately disappeared.”

Said Mark Twain: “Susy’s Biography interests itself pretty exclusively with historical facts; where they happen is not a matter of much concern to her. When other historians refer to the Bunker Hill Monument they know it is not necessary to mention that this monument is in Boston. Susy recognizes that when she mentions Sour Mash it is not necessary to localize her. To Susy, Sour Mash is the Bunker Hill Monument of Quarry Farm” (Salsbury, p. 211). And to Twain.

“SUSY: ‘Papa says if the collera comes here he will take Sour-Mash to the mountains...’” (Salsbury, p. 212).

Business with his publisher occasionally took Twain away from his family for short spells. He was in New York City and thinking of his family back at Quarry Farm when he wrote: “And now Aunt Sue is taking advantage of the absence of their natural protector to set out the Mash family an hour ahead of time” (Salsbury, p. 232).

When Twain was there the cats were rarely put out. It was most annoying to Susy that the cats “come into our rooms at night, and jump upon the beds, or else upon the chairs, and laugh—But as they are papa’s own pets, and have been baptized by him, a great difference of opinion prevails concerning them, and while I am crazy to banish them ... Clara will interfere, and go to sleep cuddling one in her arms ...” (Salsbury, p. 244).

During the summer of 1887 Mark Twain worked steadily on his new book *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*. At 52 his hair was nearly white and showed off to great advantage when he wore his favorite white flannels.

The girls had an exciting time during the Fourth of July from their vantage point on top of East Hill. Jean had torpedoes during the day and the family set off fireworks at night. There were six spectacular fires down in Elmira set off accidentally by firecrackers, as well as many private displays. It was all too much for Sour Mash who took off down the hill and was not seen again for two days. Mark Twain recorded: "That cat of ours went down to town—3 miles through the woods, in the night—and attended a colored-people's church festival where she didn't even know the deacons—was gone 48 hours, and marched home again this morning. Now think of that! That cat is not for sale. Talented cat. Religious cat. And no color prejudice either" (Salsbury, p. 244).

One of Twain's more futile yet hilarious undertakings that summer was to teach the new collie not to chase the cats. It tore up and down the yard and fields, scattering the cats, driving the cows every which way, till finally Twain declared: "We have put in this whole Sunday forenoon teaching the new dog to let the cats alone, and it has been uncommonly lively for those 5 cats. They have spent the most of the time in the trees, swearing. He is the alertest dog that ever was; nothing escapes his observation; and as to movement, he makes a white streak through the air 30 yards long when he is getting started; after that he is invisible" (Salsbury, p. 245).

Sour Mash was eventually immortalized by Mark Twain in his short story "The Autobiography of Belshazzar" written probably during his stay at the farm in the summer of 1895, about events that took place ten years earlier, but was not published until 1959 in *Concerning Cats, Two Tales by Mark Twain*. It is the most extensive record of his cats at Quarry Farm, and perhaps he intended it to be published earlier since he changed the names of all the human characters. Belshazzar, the young son of Sour Mash, narrates the story of how Mr. Wagner (Twain) gave him his name: "He was well meaning, but a kind of ass. In his looks he was quite ordinary, but did not know it; and he was clumsy with his hands and wobbly in his gait, and drawled his words, and was lazy, and unreliable and meddlesome, but had a good head of hair. It was he that named me ... (p. 24).

"I was born about noon; next came my three sisters, and then my two brothers. Pretty soon the children came along, and when they saw us they were delighted. They were carrying their father's luncheon up to his study, which was a fanciful little glass cage on the tip-top of the hill They spread the luncheon on the ground so as to make room,

and carried us home in the basket, my mamma trotting behind and waving her tail She had a good opinion of herself, and was entitled to it; for she was beautiful and slender and young, with easy and graceful carriage, cultured manners, and an aristocratic bearing proper to her blood, she being of fine old three-color tortoise-shell stock, by long odds the best and bluest on the hill” (p. 25).

He describes the evening they were brought out on the great porch to be named: “There was a roof overhead, and sail-cloth curtains to let down and enclose the whole porch like a room, in stormy weather; and plenty of sofas and easy chairs; and Persian rugs from end to end, spread there for us to scamper about on; and three tables with lamps on them; and cats and dogs and books and workbaskets all about; and in fair weather with the curtains up you could look out over the distant valley in the other world and see the lights twinkling in the town. It was still and reposeful and cosy up there—ever so still and peaceful” (p.27).

“I was the first one named that evening. Belshazzar. I never liked the name. I should not have minded it so much if it had been given me a syllable at a time, with a week between to rest in and gather strength; but as it was, it was too long and heavy and solid, coming all in a pile that way and I so feeble and only three inches long. I was never strong afterward” (p. 29).

Belshazzar had a few words to say about the other cat and dog residents of neighbors: “Alexander Hamilton came and bent down his vast head and nosed us and said some handsome things about us. Sour Mash was not disturbed, for she and he had been friends from birth; he used to carry her about in his mouth when she was little, and let her sleep snuggled against his breast between his paws in cold weather. But when Carlo Hopkins, of the next farm came plunging in and was going to smell of us and give an opinion, that was another matter; mamma jumped for his back and rode him all over the place ... She was of a decided and inflexible nature, and full of political and religious prejudices...” (p.26).

The summer of 1903 was the last one Mark Twain spent at Quarry Farm. Livy was failing and died the next year. Susy had died seven years earlier. Without his family he couldn't bear to return. One of his final summer retreats was an isolated farm outside of Dublin, New Hampshire. But he was so lonely that he rented a kitten by the month from a farmer's wife! “Then I got a discount by taking three.”

Two were black with white faces and paws. One was grey. “These markings are just the same on both cats so exactly the same that when you call one the other is likely to answer, because they cannot tell each other apart ... they do not need two names, so they have but one between them. We call both of them Sackcloth, and the gray one Ashes ... Hardly any cats are affected by music, but these are; when I sing they go reverently away, showing how deeply they feel it. Sour Mash never cared for these things. She had many noble qualities, but at bottom she was not refined, and cared little or nothing for theology and the arts” (Smith, p. 248).

She was ... “just to her friends and unjust to her enemies” and in the words of a neighboring farmer: “Other Christians is always worrying about other people’s opinions, but Sour Mash don’t give a damn” (Smith, p. 247). She was a lot like her master. Perhaps he had her in mind when he made one of his later notebook entries: “If man could be crossed with the cat it would improve man, but it would deteriorate the cat”(Paine, p. 982). Who knows?

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“Love to All the Jolly Household”

A Study of the Cranes of Quarry Farm, Their Lives, and Their Relationships with Mark Twain

by Gretchen Ehle Sharlow

Gretchen Sharlow completed her Master's Degree at Elmira College in 1991. At the time, she served as the Associate Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies. Her thesis was completed under the direction of Elmira College's Professor Malcolm Marsden and Dr. Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr., Professor Emeritus. The Mark Twain Society Bulletin, Vol. XIV, No. 2, July 1991, noted that “the thesis will be of great interest to scholars visiting Quarry Farm and further stimulate the growing interest in the character of Mark Twain's Elmira circle and the extent and direction of its influence on his life.” From 1992 to 2002, Gretchen Sharlow served as Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies. Upon her retirement, Elmira College conferred upon her the title Director, Center for Mark Twain Studies Emerita.

Introduction

The importance of Susan and Theodore Crane to Mark Twain's biography has been overlooked in the recent studies, in spite of the fact that they had significant influence on the life of the Clemens family and on Mark Twain as a writer. Theodore Crane was among the first in the family to endorse Mark Twain as a suitable husband for Olivia Langdon. He had been in business with his father-in-law, Jervis Langdon, even before the latter ventured from lumbering into the coal business, accumulating a fortune in just nine years. For approximately twenty summers from 1870 to 1889, Mark Twain and his family lived with the Cranes in Elmira, New York. It was that period which biographers have characterized as being the happiest, healthiest and most productive for Mark Twain. The famous Study, where Mark Twain wrote lengthy portions of his classics and many short stories and magazine articles, was located at Quarry Farm, just a short distance from the Crane's home. Although the Cranes had no children, they were involved in the lives of the Clemens children and were very devoted to them. Susan Crane was present when Langdon Clemens was born in Buffalo and when Susy, Clara, and Jean

were born in Elmira. She was at Susy Clemens' deathbed in Hartford in 1896. In 1888, the Clemens family helped care for Theodore Crane after he suffered a stroke and were with him at Quarry Farm when he died ten months later. His long illness and death affected Mark Twain's composition of the final chapters of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. After her husband's death, Susan Crane remained closely involved with the Clemens family for the remainder of their lives, outliving all but Clara. From 1903 until 1919, she distinguished herself as a pioneer in the production of pure milk at her experimental Quarry Farm Dairy.

The reason for the Cranes' obscurity in the record stems from what Justin Kaplan referred to in his *Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain* as, "Clemens' domestic idyll, which he celebrated publicly but kept closed to all but the intimates of the Nook Farm circle" (278). The Cranes were part of the "domestic idyll" and their home, Quarry Farm, stayed in the family as a private residence, closed and protected from public scrutiny until 1982. Like the "Sleeping Beauty," the story of the Cranes and the life at Quarry Farm was hidden.

In 1982, the grand nephew of Mark Twain, Jervis Langdon, Jr., gave a portion of the farm to Elmira College for the purpose of developing a Center for Mark Twain Studies at Quarry Farm, making it easier for scholars to learn more about Susan and Theodore Crane. The gift included the house and farm setting still reflecting the original occupants, as well as documents, including books belonging to Theodore Crane which contained Mark Twain's marginalia. This evidence, along with previous overlooked records found in the Park Church Archives, Steele Memorial Library, Chemung County Historical Museum Archives and other area depositories, now make it possible for scholars to return the Cranes to their rightfully important position in the Mark Twain biography. This paper will feature the initial reporting of many facts, including the known details of Susan Crane's adoption and the fact that Theodore Crane's parents were anti-slavery people like the Langdons. The family letters express exceptionally close and influential relationships. These many previously unpublished documents, together with information provided by scholars such as Albert Bigelow Paine, Rufus Rockwell Wilson, and Mark Twain's niece, Dr. Ida Langdon, will begin to answer the questions about who the Cranes were and to what extent they influenced their brother-in-law.

Family Background

Susan Crane was the adopted daughter of Jervis and Olivia Lewis Langdon. Records show that Susan Crane knew of her adoption and most likely spoke openly of it, particularly when she was a young woman. She was born February 18, 1836, in Spencer, New York. Her mother, Mary Andrus Dean, died at age thirty-two on September 3, 1837; and her father, Col. Elijah Dean, died in October, 1840. There were other Dean children. Susan maintained contact with a brother, Stephen Dean (1832-1908), throughout his life. Dates and information found in a memorial booklet published in 1915 entitled, "Book of Remembrance, Presbyterian Church, Spencer, N.Y. 1815-1915," suggest that the Dean family and the Jervis Langdon family had mutual contacts within the local church. The church was founded as a Congregational Church in North Spencer, then called Huggtown, on November 23, 1815. Susan's grandfather, Richard Andrus, was a church leader in its early years. The connection between the families may have been provided by Jervis Langdon's sister-in-law, Jerusha Langdon, who had joined the Spencer church "by letter from Enfield, July 1837." Jervis and Olivia Lewis Langdon, having been married in 1832, had also left Enfield, New York, in 1837 and were living in nearby Ithaca and had no children. On July 15, 1915, Susan Crane wrote to Stephen Dean's son, Seton H. Dean, and noted that there had actually been four Dean children whom she did not name, but stated that a letter from Mrs. Halsey giving birth dates had been lost and that she knew of no other means of finding the Dean family dates.

In a September 19, 1886, article in the *Chicago Tribune*, entitled "A Day with Mark Twain," Edwin J. Park incorrectly stated that Quarry Farm was "owned jointly by Mr. Clemens and his brother-in-law, Theodore Crane of Elmira." He was correct, though, in stating that "Mr. Crane married an adopted sister of Mrs. Clemens, and is associated in business with Gen. Charles J. Langdon, Mrs. Clemens' brother, who is a very wealthy man, being head of the great Clearfield Coal Company."

Jervis Langdon had been specific in the language of his Last Will and Testament, dated June 25, 1870, in defining Susan as his daughter and treating her equally with his other daughter and son. The Executors of his estate were his business associate, J.D.F. Slee, his daughter Olivia's husband, Samuel L. Clemens, and Susan's husband, Theodore Crane. His son, Charles (1849-1916), was then still a minor. His wife, Olivia Langdon, was named the Executrix. The distribution of the estate began with the gift to "my daughter Mrs. Susan L. Crane the farm on

the East Hill upon which I have lately erected a dwelling house.” (Earlier in February, 1870, Mr. Langdon had purchased a house in Buffalo for newlyweds Olivia and Samuel Clemens.) The Will gave specified sums of money to a nephew and two nieces and the remainder of the estate being distributed according to the law and prearranged J. Langdon & Co. contracts that provided equally for Jervis Langdon’s three children.

The date of Susan’s adoption is unknown. A March 27, 1845, letter written from Knoxville, Pennsylvania, by Lucy Billings to Olivia Lewis Langdon, then of Ithaca, New York, provides several refreshing glimpses of the Langdons and mentions Susan:

I am anxious to know whether you move to Elmira or not, I hear it is so and then again it is contradicted. The last news was that it was so, for Mr. L. had hired a house but as I know he is in the habit of keeping houses hired around that does not go for any thing in my mind... At any rate we are expecting to see you here this summer to make a good long visit and if you move to Elmira I shall enjoy my visits there... My housekeeping as yet is confined to...mending a little now and then but I do not much of that for you know I go on the principle that a hole lasts longer than a patch. As to my husband...he is more like your husband than any man I can know—always making allowances for the different bringing up....tell Mary from me that it is better to put off the courting until after marriage as I know by experience...She had better come here and take a lesson of me in obeying, though it is one thing to obey another to make your husband think you do...Tell Mr. L that I hope I have learned some careful lessons of his wife but whether I put them in practice is for him to decide upon when he makes that visit...I think Susan Anna and Edward would like our large yard to play in I should like to look out and see them playing now hope I shall have that pleasure some time in the mean time

Susan and Anna must learn as fast as possible
in school so I can see they improve (CCHMA).

Lucy's letter suggests that Anna and Edward may have been the names of the previously unidentified Dean children.

Theodore Crane also lost his mother when he was very young. He was born on September 26, 1831 in Havana, New York, now Montour Falls, the son of Hiram and Emeline Demarest Crane (1809-1832). By January 1, 1836, Hiram Crane, with a second wife, Ann Eliza Jones Crane (1811-1877), had moved his family to Elmira and had joined the First Presbyterian Church. Ausburn Towner's *History of Chemung County* notes that Hiram Crane was among the county's early successful lumber merchants and had been attracted to Elmira after the 1832 completion of the Chemung Canal (164). An 1852 map of Elmira, located in the Elmira College Mark Twain Archives, places the Crane lumber yard on the bank of the Chemung Canal and the Crane home on Union Street, a neighborhood also occupied by other prominent citizens.

A letter written in 1906 by Susan Crane to Mark Twain suggest the status and quality of that neighborhood on the east side of Elmira:

Yesterday I went to a house on Third St. In coming away the young woman on whom I called, said, "This is the old Langdon house." I could hardly believe it as the house was faced another way, was added to etc. I was taken to the largest first floor room, said to have been the old parlor. In the large windows, the heavy door and window casings, there was a familiarity, still I could not be sure, and said to the woman who had known the house from her childhood which was in the 30's with my own, "If you will show me a certain little window cut under the eaves, I will believe." "Oh yes, that we call the cubby and is in the attic, I can show it to you." Sure enough, there it was, cut at my request in a dark room where I slept in the spring of 1846 or 7. When the big parlor window at Quarry Farm was made it did not give me more joy, if as much. A large part of

the joy of the small window was the light, a still larger joy was in the fact that I was allowed to take the baby Livy up to that room. Seat her on a chair on the inside, next to the window while I sat outside with a chair in front as a horse. In this way we took long journeys to Ithaca and other points of interest, while you and Huck Finn and others were having some of your fun. To have that dear little girl to myself, near that window was joy enough, making me very rich, she too was happy in the play. Convinced, I returned to the parlor where Livy was born, and was vividly restored to the time, the Town, and the personality of 1845 & 6. The small house to which I have gone on a mission every month for two years, I must call a spiritual quality. Now it speaks to me and always will, as it can to no one else, and no other house can speak to me. (MTP).

On September 1, 1924, the Rev. Albert G. Cornwall, in a “Memorial Tribute to Susan Crane,” testified to her reliability as a historian, noting that she could “recount with unerring exactness the incidents when she was a little child.” Her 1906 letter to Mark Twain provides the chronological record of the first two Langdon houses in Elmira.

As Lucy Billings’ letter suggests, the Langdons did move to Elmira that spring of 1845 and “hired” a small house on Second Street for only a few months instead of the previously reported “two years.” Before 1845, Jervis Langdon had undergone some “false starts as a storekeeper in upstate towns” (Kaplan 77). His move to Elmira, like Hiram Crane’s, was inspired by the presence of the Chemung Canal and lumber. With Sylvester G. Andrus, he established the Andrus & Langdon lumber business near the canal, the company owning tracts of lumber in Steuben and Allegheny counties (*Buffalo Express*, 15 August 1870, 2:4). By the fall of 1845, the Langdons had moved from the rented house on Second Street and had purchased the house on the corner of East Third and Union Streets. The Rev. Thomas K. Beecher’s 1870 “Memorial Tribute to Jervis Langdon” described it as “a modest little house on East Union St. purchased for twelve or thirteen thousand dollars.” According to Su-

san Crane, Olivia Louise Langdon was born in that house, November 27, 1845.

“... the time, the Town, and the personality...”

Slavery was an issue forming the personality of 1845. While Elmira was rapidly becoming a commercial transportation center, it was also an active stop on the Underground Railroad. The Langdons were involved in the abolition movement and were “conductors” on the Underground Railroad. Referring to the period in his January 11, 1891, “Memorial Tribute to Olivia Lewis Langdon,” the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher said, “The Langdon house, however small had room in it for abolitionists—Garrison, Phillips, Quincy, Johnson, Gerritt Smith, Foster, Fred Douglas and other men less famous. The family horse and purse were at the services of fugitives from slavery.” Earlier, at Jervis Langdon’s death, Beecher had said, “At a time when opposition to slavery was costly, when it ruled a man not only out of his political party but out of his church and out of good society, and caused his children to be pointed at with a sneer; at a time when his business prospects must needs suffer, and property be endangered, Mr. Langdon was a pronounced and determined anti-slavery man.”

In 1845, Thomas Beecher was not yet in Elmira. His account of an abolition movement filled with violence and social ostracism does not seem to apply to the Elmira community. Indeed, Jervis Langdon was a “pronounced and determined antislavery man,” and his convictions did affect his relationship with the Presbyterian Church. Jervis and Olivia Lewis Langdon, along with other abolitionists who left Elmira’s First Presbyterian Church because of its refusal to declare in writing their opposition to slavery, founded the Independent Congregational Church on January 31, 1845. Hiram and Ann Eliza Crane followed suit and joined the new church on February 18, 1845. However, the minutes recording the abolitionists’ split from the First Presbyterian Church suggest that the proceedings were conducted peacefully and with dignity; the Cranes’ and the Langdons’ neighbor, Simeon Benjamin, was the leader of the First Presbyterian Church Elders as well as a participant in the Underground Railroad (Barber 34).

A June 15, 1947, article in the *Elmira Telegram* gives an account of Elmira’s Underground Railroad by Elmira historian and Lincoln authority, Dr. Rufus Rockwell Wilson. According to Wilson, the movement began in Elmira after the completion of the Northern Central Railroad

and grew chiefly through the efforts of escaped slave, John W. Jones. Mr. Jones had arrived in the area on July 5, 1844, and was protected and treated kindly by Dr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Smith (charter members of the Independent Congregational Church). He was then given a home in the Union Street neighborhood with Judge A.S. Thurston and his sister Clarissa Thurston. The Thurstons taught him to read and write and in 1847 he attended Miss Thurston's newly established private school. The 1850 completion of the Northern Central Railway connected John Jones with the efforts of another black man and Underground Railroad conductor in Philadelphia, William Still, "who would send companies of fugitives to Elmira ... often in parties of six to ten." With the assistance of a sympathetic railroad employee, "the fugitives consigned to [Jones] were put in the baggage car of a train which left Elmira at 4 o'clock in the morning and went through without change to the Niagara River.... Between 1851 and 1860 he received and cared for 800 fugitives not one of whom were ever captured or returned to his or her owner." Wilson credits Jervis Langdon and Thomas K. Beecher, who came to Elmira in 1854, as John Jones' "chief supporters." Wilson also commented that John Jones "worked so quietly and effectively that few citizens of Elmira were aware of his activities."

Education for women was another issue forming the personality of the period. Jervis Langdon and Simeon Benjamin may have disagreed on some of the ways of dealing with the slavery problem, but they worked together to remedy the problem of inequality for women in higher education. In the 1840s, it was not possible for women to acquire a college education of equal standard to that available for men. Throughout the country, those women who enjoyed higher education at all were being educated in private seminaries of varying quality. Mt. Holyoke, founded as a college in 1837, as pointed out by W. Charles Barber in *Elmira College The First 100 Years*, "did not qualify, however high its standards above the prevailing seminary level" (11).

Elmira's young women, including Susan and Livy Langdon and the Cranes' daughter, Anna, attended the Elmira Female Seminary, founded in 1847 by Clarissa Thurston. The "1851 Annual Catalogue" stated the mission: "This Institution is designed to furnish young ladies with an opportunity to acquire a thorough scientific education, and at the same time to aid them in the formation of such a character as shall fit them for the active duties of life. A three years' course is proposed after

going through the studies of the Preparatory Department, at the expiration of which time diplomas will be given.”

Girls under the age of twelve attended the Preparatory Department to undergo “training to habits of study and thought.” All were exposed to courses in Reading, Orthography, Penmanship, Arithmetic, Grammar, General History, Geography, and History of the United States. The three years’ course of study which followed added Botany, Physiology, Astronomy, Philosophy, advanced mathematics, Theology and “Evidence of Christianity.” The Bible was a “text-book for all classes,” with “daily instructions drawn from its sacred pages.” Surviving records show Livy Langdon in the Preparatory Department at age six, ten and twelve years old. Susan was awarded a “Certificate of Merit” on March 31, 1853, at the age of seventeen.

However fine Miss Thurston’s Seminary may have been, by May, 1853, as a result of the determination and financial leadership of Simeon Benjamin, the “Elmira movers” were planning Elmira Female College, the first college in the United States qualified by the Regents of New York State to grant the degree to women equal to that being given to men. On August 20, 1853, a committee of seven was elected to “enter into a contract or contracts for the erection and completion of the building ... to take the general supervision of the interests of the institution and generally to superintend its affairs until trustees shall be elected...” Committee members were Simeon Benjamin, Harvey Luce, A.C. Ely, Harvey A. Sackett, E.N. Barber, S. Ayers and Jervis Langdon. The committee functioned until May 30, 1863 (18).

In May, 1862, in order to insure a nonsectarian nature for the College, with a “broad and Catholic basis,” Benjamin called for a Board of Trustees proposed by the Presbyterian Synod of Geneva with membership to include, “Dutch Reformed, Protestant Episcopal, Congregational, Methodist, and Baptist Churches” (85). Jervis Langdon was appointed to this first board and remained a Trustee of the College until his death in 1870. His youngest daughter Livy attended the College’s Preparatory Department at age fourteen.

The nature of Theodore Crane’s educational background is unclear. The fact that he did not join the Independent Congregational Church until 1858, several years after his younger sister, suggests that he may have attended schools outside of Elmira. His collection of books discovered in the library at Quarry Farm suggests the tastes of a well educated person.

If two people could be said to epitomize “the time the town and the personality” of this period, they would be the able and tolerant Thomas K. Beecher (1826-1900) and Julia Jones Beecher (1826-1905). Jervis Langdon was instrumental in bringing the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher to Elmira in 1854 as “teacher” for the Independent Congregational Church, a title Beecher preferred to minister or pastor. He remained a “teacher” of the church for forty-six years. Julia Beecher came to Elmira in 1857 as Beecher’s second wife. His first wife, Olivia Day, the daughter of President Day of Yale College, had been her cousin and dearest friend. The Beechers were intimate friends of the Langdons, Cranes and Clemenses, and the close neighbors of the Cranes. In the unpublished dictation for his *Autobiography*, Mark Twain declared Thomas Beecher to be “one of the best men” he had ever known (MTP). The Beecher ministry, which was accomplished as a partnership by Thomas and Julia Beecher, made a tremendous impact on the community as well as on the Church. At Thomas Beecher’s death, the city erected a statue in his honor and later memorialized Julia Beecher by placing her bas relief portrait on an impressive city fountain, the only public memorial in Elmira to a woman for many years.

Like Jervis Langdon, both Julia and Thomas Beecher had family roots in New England. Frances Juliana Jones Beecher’s ancestor was Cotton Mather and her grandfather was Noah Webster. Thomas Kennicut Beecher was a member of the famous Lyman Beecher family that included Catharine Beecher, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Ward Beecher and Isabella Beecher Hooker. Beecher records show that the Langdon and Beecher friendship had begun early in New England and that the families were related by marriage. Lyman Stowe in *Saints, Sinners and Beechers* quoted his grandfather, the Rev. Lyman Beecher, “Squire Langdon used to say that when he saw me out digging potatoes Saturday evening he expected a good sermon Sunday morning” (46).

Isabella Beecher Hooker wrote to her husband John from New Haven, Connecticut, on November 10, 1844, and mentioned having tea with the Langdons. In another letter to John Hooker, September 12, 1849, she told of the marriage of “our pretty Elisa Langdon of N. Haven to Augustus Cowles [of Hartford]—while he is hardly able to stand ... and is on the border of the grave;” And then on January 26, 1863, “I have just come from spending the day at Dr. Taylor’s [in New York City] with sisters ... Ella Wolcott—Mr. & Mrs. Langdon & two or three other Elmira friends—Mr. Langdon has just come home with me & we have

renewed our old friendship. He is a cousin by marriage” (SDF). A quote from John Hooker’s 1895, “*Some Reminiscences of a Long Life*,” reprinted in Joseph S. Van Why’s pamphlet “Nook Farm,” is also suggestive of a longstanding friendship: “Mark Twain built and has ever since occupied, a residence near us, his wife being the daughter of a very intimate and much loved friend of my wife” (9).

Much has been written about the influence of the Langdons and Elmira on Mark Twain. Most people agree that Van Wyck Brooks’ criticisms in *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* were harsh and inaccurate. Justin Kaplan’s depiction of Mark Twain’s invading a “staid” Elmira is inaccurate as well, particularly if one considers the Beecher influence.

The Beechers were champions of independent free thinking and religious tolerance. Upon his arrival in Elmira, Mr. Beecher declared that he had the “... settled impression that organized authority in religion had had its day; that traditional customs enforced by authority tend to insincerity; that solemn sourness and sanctimonious melancholy had better become obsolete ...” (quoted in Meltzer 29). In his book *Our Seven Churches*, Thomas Beecher articulated a philosophy which appreciated a variety of individual approaches to religion and an impatience with sectarianism. The Rev. Annis Ford Eastman said of Thomas Beecher: “he who denies all human authority over his conscience, who fearlessly examines all religious systems and social conventions, taking what is good for him and rejecting what is bad, who is never moved out of his way by popular enthusiasms—who can see both sides of every question, and bravely state them—he must often be a sore trial to the average sense of propriety in a community” (Stowe 373). Gilbert Meltzer recognized Thomas Beecher’s important contribution to Elmira in his book *The Beginnings of Elmira College*: “he brought contradiction, independence, humor, sincerity, originality, frankness, intellectual eagerness and humanity” (29). In *Enjoyment of Living*, Max Eastman wrote of Julia Beecher: “Mrs. Beecher was quite as headstrong as her husband in smashing through forms and conventions, and her rebellion was not only mortal but aesthetic. She bobbed her hair in 1857” (111). Finally, Eva Taylor’s “*A Short History of the Park Church of Elmira*” states: “She had a brilliant mind, was original and witty, had plenty of common sense and a great fund of energy. ‘My strong, courageous, energetic Julia,’ said Mr. Beecher, ‘to whom belong nine-tenths of the achievement of our long life in Elmira.’” (20).

Thomas and Julia Beecher’s Sunday School was in no way similar to Mark Twain’s Sunday school of “narrow, puritanical influences”

as Brooks charges (162). There was a time for structured Bible study, but time too for “romping,” dancing, even billiards. The Beechers advocated a broad religious education that included lessons in science and literature. Eventually, the Church housed Elmira’s first lending library and a stage for performances by the Shakespeare Club. On Sunday mornings, the children left worship service to attend their classes by marching to such lively music as “There’ll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight” or “Captain Jinx and the Horse Marines.” Dr. Ida Langdon described the Beecher Sunday School at the 110th Anniversary of The Park Church, November 12, 1956: “... it was an institution that interested and delighted its young members (its older ones too), that taught them a great deal about the Bible, and that provided a remarkable, and I think lasting discipline. Its atmosphere was very happy and absorbing, at times even exciting, but its exactions were absolute” (10). In 1896, Julia Beecher, reminiscing about her 1858 Sunday School class, said: “I remember my first Sunday class consisting of Alice and Clara and Fidelia, Ella, two Emmas, Jenny, Olivia and four Marys. I will show you the picture of those girls and tell you what their names are now if you come to me privately” (“The Park Church—1846-1896,” 13). The photograph survives in the Park Church Archives. Julia Beecher is centered in an oval of young girls, including Olivia Langdon, Emma and Mary Nye, and Alice and Clara Spaulding.

Throughout their lifetime, the Cranes considered the Beechers to be like members of the family and the church, an extension of their home. They were married by Thomas Beecher on December 7, 1858, in the Langdon house on Third Street. In 1883, Olivia Lewis Landgon looked back to the day:

My dear children—on the twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage... I am glad that your life together has, for a quarter century been so exceptionally happy—and that your increasing love for, and fidelity toward each other have been rewarded by such satisfactory and peaceful result ...Well I remember the day (stormy without) when you stepped into your life-bark together and sailed away, each with, and for the other, leaving all else behind. But my comfort

was found in this—that you would find your
mooring and Home in Elmira (ECMTA).

Hiram Crane’s death at age forty-seven on May 24, 1853, most likely left twenty-one-year-old Theodore to manage the Crane lumber yard, a task which he continued to perform until 1861. He then joined in business with his father-in-law who was just beginning to expand from lumbering to coal. During that first year and in 1862, he managed a coal business for Jervis Langdon in Washington before returning to Elmira as financial manager for the Langdon enterprise.

The Andrus and Langdon lumbering firm closed in 1855. Jervis Langdon then joined with General Alexander S. Diven to purchase an interest in a lumber mill in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. At the same time, he expanded his interests into the sale of coal; his firm, the Remington, Audenreid & Co., sold the first coal in Elmira. Later that year, realizing the potential of the coal business, he purchased coal property in Pittston, Pennsylvania. His rapid expansion continued as he entered a series of partnerships as he moved into the mining and shipping of coal. However, by 1865, he had dissolved all partnerships and by 1866 had exclusive ownership of a large coal mine at Shamoken, Pennsylvania (*Buffalo Express* 1870).

By the time the Cranes returned to Elmira from their year in Washington, the Langdons no longer lived in the “modest little house” on Third Street. In November, 1862, they had purchased a house from Anson Ely directly across the street from the Independent Congregational Church. The house was soon enlarged into a stately home with a separate area for the Cranes. It was the first house in Elmira to have running water (Cotton 45).

Entries from an 1867 diary of Olivia Lewis Langdon mention the Cranes and enhance some of the already familiar events leading up to Mark Twain’s first, August 24, 1868, visit to Elmira. Despite Mrs. Langdon’s statement in her diary, certainly it was not an “uneventful” time.

The first two entries refer to the 1867 *Quaker City* cruise, on which Mark Twain was to meet Charles Langdon and see the oval miniature picture of Livy:

Feb. Sat. 9 1867

Quite an event has taken place in our uneventful home today ... a day or two since Mr. L. wrote to Rev. Henry Ward Beecher inquiring if Charlie could accompany his family in the expedition which is fitting out for a trip to Europe, the Holy Land, Egypt and elsewhere—the answer from Mr. Beecher came today inviting Charlie very kindly to be in the party, and his father has decided to have him go.

April 16, 1867... Received letters this morning from Captain Duncan and Capt. D. urges Charlie's going to Europe and promises to be his guardian.

The following diary excerpt relates to Susan's talent and love of flower arranging. On April 21, 1897, she was honored by the Park Church for twenty-five years of "service for flowers" and in 1924 was referred to as "Our Lady of the Flowers" for having arranged the Church's altar flowers for over fifty years.

April 16, 1867 Sue and Alice Hooker went up the river and got a quantity of trailing arbutus. Sue is arranging the flowers for the Episcopal Churches.

The Elmira College Mark Twain Archives houses the astronomy text book inscribed by Susan: "Used in Clara Thurston's School, 1852":

April 26, 1867 This evening Theo, Sue, Alice and Charlie went up to the observatory at the College and had a fine look at the stars.

Mrs. Langdon's earlier diary entries had mentioned receiving letters from Livia, as Livy was often called by her mother. Dr. Laura Skandera reports Livy had been in New York City under the care of Dr. Taylor, who had been treating her for tuberculosis of the spine. This may have been the aftermath of the fall on the ice recounted by Mark Twain

in the *Autobiography*. The entry tells of Livy's return and also shows a playful side of the Cranes.

May 27, 1867 When we were seated at the breakfast table ... Livia walked into the dining room. We could not have been more astonished and delighted. Theo and Sue and Dolly were the only ones who had knowledge of her coming. The plan for taking us by surprise was formed by Livia and Theodore some time ago. Lucius Stanley came up with her and Theodore and Miki met her with the carriage at the depot. The train was on time.

All are now familiar with the story of Mark Twain's arrival in Elmira by train to visit Charles Langdon and to begin his courtship to win the girl in the oval picture which he had seen on the *Quaker City* cruise and whom he had met at the Dickens Reading in New York the previous December. In fact, the love story of Olivia Langdon and Samuel Clemens has been well documented. However, the detail of Theodore Crane's contribution at the time of the engagement merits restating. In *New York State in Literature*, Rufus Rockwell Wilson, who as a young journalist in Elmira in 1889 had accompanied Rudyard Kipling on a quest to meet Mark Twain, wrote:

... from the first Jervis Langdon had faith in the essential manliness of his daughter's suitor, and after other visits and the inquiries it behooved a careful father to make, on February 4, 1869, gave his approval to a formal engagement. Olivia's mother and elder sister, aware that she now knew her own mind, seconded this approval, and so did the latter's husband, Theodore Crane, who long before had read Mark Twain's sketches and now endorsed him "without reserve" (338).

The Langdon family lore is that upon his arrival in Elmira, Mark Twain was a "diamond in the rough;" even still, he was appreciated. He

seems to have arrived at the right time in the right place and with the right people. Elmira became one of his favorite homes.

To Correct Dixon Wecter's Judgement of Theodore Crane

Dixon Wecter accomplished a great deal during his four years from 1946 to 1950 as the third editor of the Mark Twain Estate, after he succeeded Albert Bigelow Paine and Bernard DeVoto. In 1949, the collection known as the Mark Twain Papers moved with him to the University of California at Berkeley, where he occupied the Byrne Chair of United States History. At Berkeley's Bancroft Library, he worked on his long range publishing project to deal with the enormous quantity of letters, notebooks, journals, partial and entire manuscripts. His early projects included the annotated editions of letters—*Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks* (1949) and *The Love Letters of Mark Twain* (1950).

Dixon Wecter's ultimate goal was to write a two volume "truly definitive biography" of Mark Twain. As a result of his sudden death in 1950, only the first section, now considered the definitive study of the boyhood years, was completed, *Sam Clemens in Hannibal* (1952). In the Preface, Elizabeth Wecter described her husband's thorough and exacting efforts at "steeping himself in Twainiana" and visiting actual sites, even retracing the Mississippi River routes while studying transcripts of the river notebooks (vi).

Wecter was the first biographer since Paine to have access to the Mark Twain Papers (vi). James Cox explained in his "Introduction to the Chelsea House Edition" of the Paine biography that, until his death in 1937, Paine had "acted as censor and custodian, doing all he could to preserve the life he had written and unhesitatingly denying would-be interpreters like DeVoto access to the papers" (xix). In *Mark Twain God's Fool*, Hamlin Hill said that, even though "every scrap of paper" had been "scrupulously saved," Paine with his "fastidious Victorian sense of propriety" worked in concert with Mark Twain's surviving daughter Clara as her "officially chosen guardian" of an image that she felt the public expected (xvi).

Dixon Wecter's work must have been somewhat like breaking into the "domestic idyll" at Quarry Farm and unfortunately Wecter died before he could have completed a concentrated study of materials relating to the Cranes, who had been touched on only briefly in the annotations of his earlier editions of letters. If he had had the time and the access to the documents, his judgement of Theodore Crane would

presumably have been different. In *The Love Letters of Mark Twain* he said: “Theodore Crane had never been favorite of, and was occasionally a positive irritant to, his famous brother-in-law. But his long illness and death readily erased the score” (251).

This judgment seems based on just two references which Clemens made about Theodore Crane, one in the letter to Mary Mason Fairbanks, the other, in the dictation for the *Autobiography*. The November 5, 1870, letter was written from Buffalo just two days before the premature birth of Langdon Clemens. It was a stressful time for the entire family, still in mourning over Jervis Langdon’s death, August 6, 1870, from stomach cancer and the September 29, 1870, death in the Clemens’ Buffalo home of Emma Nye, who had been ill for a month with typhoid fever. Mark Twain wrote:

Dear Mother:

... I want you back here just as quick as you can get through there at home. Susie will wait till then. Theodore appears to have mysteriously decided not to spend Sunday here—for which I am duly thankful. But he will die if he has to go ten days without seeing Sue. Charley writes me privately that Theodore remarked, when Sue came here, that “every time any of them in Buffalo had the stomach ache his wife had to go there”— & intimated that he was tired of it. So you see we naturally want to send Sue home to the calf as soon as possible (MTMF 139.)

Although Theodore’s presence in the home might well have been trying for the nervous father-to-be and although he seems to resent Theodore’s perfectly reasonable desire that Susan return soon to her home, Clemens’s letter should be read within the context of the very trying atmosphere in which he was living.

Wecter was undoubtedly even more influenced by the *Autobiography* dictation which when taken out of context seems most unflattering. The preceding bombastic dictation had concerned the problems in later years of the J. Langdon and Company and in speaking only of Theodore Crane’s work then, Mark Twain said:

Theodore Crane was competent in his line—that of head clerk and Superintendent of the subordinate clerks. No better man could have been found for the place; but his capacities were limited to that position. He was good and upright and indestructibly honest and honorable, but he had neither desire or ambition to anything above a chief clerk. He was much too timid to larger work of larger responsibilities (MTP).

As Clemens noted, Theodore Crane had neither aptitude nor desire for rising in the corporate hierarchy. This, however, in no way would have prevented him from being a delightful companion and a valued counselor.

These two statements seem insignificant when weighed against abundant evidence such as letters brimming with loving sentiments and suggestions of inside family humor, warmly expressed book inscriptions, and particularly a summer home environment where Mark Twain knew more happiness and serenity than irritation and was the most productive as a writer. Dixon Wecter would now most likely agree, that the relationship between the brothers-in-law was loving and favorable.

The Haven

Theodore Crane may have known the author Mark Twain through his early sketches, but the two men were only just getting acquainted personally during the courtship period when Sam wrote to Livy, January 16, 1869:

Give my loving duty to your father and mother, please. I tender my savage regards to Miss Lewis and Charlie. And I wish that you would remember me most kindly to Mr. and Mrs. Crane...I like Mr. Crane—I never have seen anything whatever about him to dislike—& you know one can't help liking Mrs. Crane (LL, 54).

The Cranes were still living with the Langdons at 303 Main Street during 1868 and 1869, but were in Florida when Sam and Livy

became officially engaged on February 4, 1869. Livy had written to Alice Hooker on December 16, 1868, to report: “Sue and Theodore left us for the South two weeks ago tomorrow night—They staid [sic] in Washington about a week, then were in Richmond a few days. I suppose that they are now in Charleston. They will go on to Florida—We hope a great deal from the changes for Sue’s throat.” A newspaper column “City and Neighborhood,” April 19, 1869, marked the Cranes’ return: “T.W. Crane, Esq. returned on Saturday from his winter’s visit to Florida—Mrs. Crane stopped in Richmond for a few weeks” (MTP). Susan had not recovered from the throat problems by the time of her return as Clemens, on May 10, 1869, reported to Mrs. Fairbanks: “Mrs. Crane seems better from her southern life, but is not. The doctors cut her throat again the other day—Charlie says, (I do not know his authority), that her days are numbered, & are few” (MTMF 97). The next spring, Mrs. Fairbanks received a more hopeful prognosis: “March, 1871, Susie is to go South immediately. Her physicians say that with great care she may live a good while, but that it is imperative that she spend her Springs South” (151).

Dixon Wecter’s annotation to the 1870 letter adds interesting details about Susan’s health: “Mr. Jervis Langdon, son of Mark Twain’s friend Charles, tells me that Susan Langdon Crane, a woman of delicate health, used to consult Dr. Updegraff, throat specialist, but the clinical details are now forgotten. Largely because of her fragility the Cranes moved to Quarry Farm on the hills above Elmira” (97).

Entries from Charles Langdon’s diary, now at the Mark Twain Project at Berkeley, record the purchase of the farm.

capitalize hill or no?

May 15, 1869 Father bought the East hill farm
which we rode to see it after dinner...

FLAG

May 29th Mr. and Mrs. Beecher Father and
Mother—Livy and Mr. Clemens and I drove to
the farm to locate the house.

Charles Langdon’s daughter, Dr. Ida Langdon, added her version of the family story in a 1955 article, “Elmira’s Langdon Family:”

... Susan, while still a little girl, was her father’s
frequent companion on the drives in which he
found refreshment and diversion. Like him she

loved high places, and it was to her great joy that he decided to buy a plain little wooden house that they often passed on the crest of East Hill. The term “week-end” was not in general use in the first half of the nineteenth century, but it was for “weekends” that the cottage was acquired, a haven for the often over-worked and over-weary Jervis Langdon (reprinted in MTE 22).

During the writing of his biography, Albert Bigelow Paine corresponded with Susan Crane and visited Quarry Farm. His account of the purchase may have been Susan’s: “It was bought quite incidentally by Mr. and Mrs. Langdon, who, driving by one evening, stopped to water the horses and decided that it would make a happy summer retreat, where the families could combine their housekeeping arrangements during vacation days” (436).

The official record is that Jervis Langdon purchased 37 1/2 acres and 30 perches from farmer and mason John Henry Faustnaught on May 14, 1869, for \$3,553.12 (Lanmon 4). From the wording of the Langdon Will and Charles’ diary, it appears that a new house was staked out and immediately erected. By the following spring, Jervis Langdon, even though seriously ill with stomach cancer, managed to retreat to the farm, as recorded in the 1870 diary of family friend Almira Munson: “May 20 ... took dinner with Mrs. Langdon & Mr. Crane... Mr. Langdon & Susie are up to the farm on east hill. [sic] his health is very poor. the trouble is in his stomach. he can sustain nothing but beef tea & warm milk. Mrs. Langdon gave me a bottle of wine for Mr. Munson ... “ (Jervis Langdon, Jr. Collection).

During the first years after Jervis Langdon’s death, while the Cranes worked to adapt the house for year-round use, the farm was used by the families as a vacation retreat from early spring into the fall. Susan’s health improved, for there are no further records of prescribed trips to the south. From the beginning, the farm was appreciated for its restorative nature, Mark Twain being one of the first to experience the benefits. The summer of 1871 was a turning point, after the months of stress that had included the deaths of Jervis Langdon and Emma Nye, followed by a winter of illness for Livy and the new baby, Langdon. During his long visit with Clemens in Elmira, an old friend of the Comstock

days, Joe Goodman, gave his enthusiastic endorsement of the first stages of the *Roughing It* manuscript; this along with many happy hours which Clemens spent with Joe “tramping” the farm, helped to restore Mark Twain’s energy and confidence in himself as a writer of good humor (Paine 436-442).

By this time too, a marvelous camaraderie had developed between the Cranes and the Clemenses. They not only shared months of housekeeping arrangements, but kept in constant touch through letters or occasional short visits to Elmira or Hartford, Connecticut, where the Clemenses had decided to settle in the fall of 1871. While Mark Twain travelled the lecture circuit, the Cranes often kept Livy company in Hartford. The following excerpts from letters underscore this camaraderie:

To “Brother Theodore” from “Saml”, spring, 1870—All right—I will come down & break one of the horses while you break the other. But are you sure your plan is good? It looks feasible, but at the same time I cannot feel certain that is the safest way. My custom heretofore when I wanted to break a horse, was to do it with a rail. You cannot get hurt then—unless of course the horse bites you (MTM).

Milford, Mass., October 1871, “Livy darling,... This printed joke is splendid. Oh I would love to see Sue & Theo & Clara [Spaulding] in our dear, dear Nook Barn. Hang it though, I’ll miss it all, just know. My darling, I deluge you now with all my love—bail it out on them second-hand when they come” (LL, 161).

From Worecester, Mass., January, 1872, “Livy darling,...I enclose a couple for Theodore—but both of them put together ain’t as good as that child’s trumpet story. ...Lecturing is hateful, but it must come to an end yet...Love to all the jolly household & that dear old Susie” (171).

Sam and Livy went to Elmira in early spring of '72 so the family would be with them for the birth of their second child, Olivia Susan. A letter from Susan Crane to Alice Hooker reflects her admiration for her brother-in-law and describes the event:

March 28, 1872, Livy had symptoms all day Monday, which increased at bed time, so decidedly, that we sent for Mrs. Gleason, who came and went to bed, as we all did, after having made all things ready for the little new comer. Mr. Clemens remained with Livy, who rested, and slept some, and at 4:00 a.m. he called Mrs. Gleason and the nurse. At 5:00 the stranger had arrived and things were set to rights. Before 8:00 Mrs. Gleason, the mother and child were all sleeping (SDF).

And later that fall, Mark Twain wrote to Susan Crane from England:

If you & Theodore will come over in the spring with Livy & me & spend the summer you shall see a country that is so beautiful that you will be obliged to believe in fairy-land. There is nothing like it elsewhere on the globe. You should have a season ticket and travel up and down every day between London and Oxford and worship nature. And Theodore can browse with me among dusty old dens that look now as they looked five hundred years ago; and puzzle over books in the British Museum that were made before Christ was born ... I would a good deal rather live here if I could get the rest of you over (Paine I, 470).

It does not seem too much to say that, in wishing that the Cranes were with him in England, Clemens was in actual fact, wishing that both the Cranes and the atmosphere which they provided for him at Quarry Farm would make England into a true "fairy-land."

In Favor of the Farm

Recently, Mitchell Smyth, writing for *The Toronto Star*, April 13, 1991, asked, “which town inspired Mark Twain to write?” He also mused over a “sedate” controversy of words between the guides at the Mark Twain Study and Exhibit in Elmira and those at the Mark Twain Memorial in Hartford, each group claiming its site as the place where Mark Twain did his best writing. The answer, of course, to Smyth’s question is that both Elmira and Hartford have a rightful claim to a home where for twenty years Mark Twain was productive, happy, and inspired; each much loved home played a crucial role in his creative process as a writer. Elmira’s claim as the actual place where the work of writing usually happened, though, is correct and can be substantiated easily with primary evidence, the famous 1874 gift from Susan Crane, the octagonal Study, as certainly the most obvious.

Two of Mark Twain’s most emphatic testimonials to his ability to work at the farm were written to Mary Mason Fairbanks:

April 13, 1875, “ ... For I can write 10 chapters in Elmira where I can write one here. For when one is in the workaday world, there’s a million interruptions and interferences. I can’t succeed except by getting clear out of the world on top of the mountain at Elmira” (MTMF 191).

Then,

March 9, 1878, “the only chance I get to work is the 3 months we spend at the farm in the summer” (222).

An article from the January 17, 1885, issue of *The Critic* entitled “Mark Twain at ‘Nook Farm’ (Hartford) and Elmira” by Charles H. Clark addresses the importance of each home to the life of the author:

Mr. Clemens divides his year into two parts, which are not exactly for work and play respectively, but which differ very much in the nature of their occupations ... At Elmira, Mr. Clemens works hard. He puts together there whatever

may have been in his thoughts and recorded in his note-books during the rest of the year. It is his time of completing work begun, and of putting into definite shape what have been suggestions and possibilities ... But while the life at Elmira is in the main seclusive and systematically industrious, that at Hartford ...is full of variety and entertainment. His time is the less restricted, and he gives himself freely to the enjoyment of social life. He entertains many friends, and his hospitable house, seldom without a guest, is one of the literary centers of the city.

After being a guest in the Hartford home, Thomas K. Beecher wrote the following, May 25, 1884:

You must know and believe on my testimony that yours is one of the few restful homes in which intelligence, culture, luxury and company combine to the compounding of a pleasure which every visitor longs to taste again.

Be cheerful, be grateful, and foam over with gladness—my dear Livy—for you are one of the successes in life upon which the Lord lets me look.

This is my “pastoral” to you and Clemens whom I congratulate because of wife, children and honors.

Mark Twain declared again in Elmira’s favor as the principal work place in a conversation with the reporter Edwin J. Park in September, 1886: “The three summer months which I spend here are usually my working months. I am free here and can work uninterruptedly, but in Hartford I don’t try to do any literary work. Yes, ...this may be called the home of “Huckleberry Finn” and other books of mine for they were written here” (*Chicago Tribune*).

Several early records provide a good picture of life at Quarry Farm. A correspondent for *The New York Times*, in an article entitled “Mark Twain’s Summer Home,” September 10, 1882, described the

house, which certainly seems by this time to be the Cranes' year-round home: "The house throughout is furnished in an elegant and costly manner. Divans, Persian rugs, easy chairs, books, statuary, articles of curia and bric-a-brac are on every side, and the whole has the appearance of a place where one could dream his life away." According to the article, Mark Twain's workday at his study began after breakfast and lasted until late afternoon. A type-writer was used for letter writing. One day a week, for "repose and rest" he would go down to the city to enjoy the company of friends, "indulging in a hotel dinner and several games of billiards." From their descriptions, Sam and Livy Clemens appear to be in the prime of life:

He is now 47 years of age, with iron gray hair, cut rather short, and mustache of the same color. He is of medium height, inclining to portliness, has a small, piercing eye, and a rather aquiline nose. He is pleasant in his manner, and talks when he has anything to say, but has a particular horror of people who expect to be entertained by witty remark, and especially of some who seem to think that they must talk nothing but nonsense in his presence. He is remarkably domestic in his tastes, and is blessed with a very lovely wife and three beautiful little daughters. Mrs. Clemens is a slender, graceful lady of rare beauty, genial, chatty, and charming (reprinted in MTSB, I:1, Feb. 1978).

Mark Twain's reference to the farm in an 1879 letter to Mrs. Fairbanks as "the serene hill-top" aptly anticipates his July 10, 1887 letter to his sister-in-law, Molly Clemens:

This is a superb Sunday ... The Cranes are reading and loafing in the canvas-curtained summer-house, fifty yards away, on a higher (the highest) point: the cats are loafing over at Ellerslie, which is the children's estate and dwelling house in their own private grounds (by deed from Susie Crane), a hundred yards from the

study, among the clover and young oaks and willows. Livy is down at the house, but I shall go and bring her up to the Cranes to help us occupy the lounges and hammocks, whence a great panorama of distant hills and valley and city is seeable. The children have gone on a lark through the neighboring hills and woods, Susie and Clara horseback and Jean driving a buggy, with the coachman for comrade and assistant at need. It is perfect day indeed (Neider 179).

Earlier family letters add to this picture of pleasant contentment:

From Theodore Crane 1885, September 15
To Mr. Samuel L. Clemens, Normandic Hotel
Broadway 38th St. NY 6 1/2 p.m.

Dear Mr. Clemens.

Your telegram just reached us, while sitting on the stoop trying to comfort the cats who have to miss you all, as much as we do. The place, from the tent to the lower gate seems funereal and desolate—We look for Jean and she is not, for Clara and Susie and they do not appear. The donkeys hang their heads and mourn—their occupation is gone and they will soon go into winter quarters and the cats will be distributed (except Sour Mash) to new owners—all this should not be—Sell the Castle and build on Quarry Farm, and let Susie teach the District School and Clara and Jean become her pupils.

I will keep you posted about the Coal business, and we will keep out spirits alive until you return next June or we go to you in the winter—Sue joined me in very much love to all your good family.

Theodore (MTF)

citation ok?

From Susan to her sister, Sunday, December 19, 1889:

Darling Livy,

... I have just turned from the south window, where Theodore and I watched the twilight fade, and give place to the darkness, and the town lights. It seems to me that I never so looked into the soul of the picture. There was the soft, light blue of the atmosphere against the whitened hills. There was an absolute silence, for there was not a breath of wind—Surely the outlook was never so beautifully spiritual, so suggestive of all things pure and good—Heaven seemed so near and God so good. I thought of Mr. Clemens’s “Rest and be thankful,” and I was thankful (MTP).

A popular anecdote in the Elmira lore is that Quarry Farm was named by Thomas K. Beecher after the fact that John Henry Faustnaught had operated a commercial quarry on the property before the Langdon purchase. Mark Twain recorded other choices for the official name with his inscription in *England in the XVIIIth Century*, Vol. VI. by W.H. Lecky:

FLAG

Theodore Crane recorded ?

T.W. Crane
Go-as-you-Please Hall
Rest & be Thankful
East Hill
Elmira, NY
Sept. 1887

Clara Clemens remembered that her aunt often referred to her home as ‘Do as you Please Hall,’ “for she wished everyone to feel complete liberty to act and think as he would” (reprinted in MTE 44).

Scholars are unanimous in their appreciation for the profound effect of the Lecky books on Mark Twain’s works and philosophy. His introduction to Lecky took place at Quarry Farm in 1874. The volumes of *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* belonged to Theodore Crane (Gribben I:400). The Paine biography mentions the

value which Clemens placed on Theodore Crane's company as well as his fine collection of books:

He found comfort in the society of Theodore Crane. Those two were always fond of each other, and often read together the books in which they were mutually interested. They had portable hammock arrangements which they placed side by side on the lawn, and read and discussed through summer afternoons (I:510).

The collection included sets of Dickens and Shakespeare, as well as the favorites mentioned by Paine, "*The Mutineers of the Bounty, Pepy's Diary* and *Two Years Before the Mast*." The two men read and reread articles from the *Atlantic* and according to Paine, Mark Twain's short piece "A Majestic Literary Fossil" (1890) "grew out of the curious old medical work containing absurd prescriptions which with Theodore Crane, he [Twain] had often laughed over at the farm" (I:510, II:899). The "curious old medical work" was *A Medical Dictionary* (1743) by Robert James (1705-1776). The book's influence can also be found in a number of other works including *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, (189) and "*Those Extraordinary Twins*" (1894) (Gribben I:350).

A major turning point for the entire family occurred on September 6, 1888, when Theodore Crane suffered a stroke. The Clemenses rescheduled their departure for Hartford from September 13th to the 24th, in order to be sure that Theodore's condition had stabilized. By Thanksgiving, the Cranes were in Hartford, where they remained for two months so that Susan could have Livy's help in caring for Theodore, who suffered both physical pain and depression. The family was in constant anticipation of his death. In mid-October, Clemens had written in his notebook, "NOTA Ein Todt-Bezeichniss anstellen lassen in N. Y. " "Have the death notice prepared in N. Y. (N&J 3: 427) . During this difficult time, Mark Twain was completing his work on *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Howard Baetzhold describes the period:

Once the Valley episodes were finished, progress on the novel during September and October was more rapid. The book was going so well, in fact, that on October 5 Clemens hope-

fully named October 22 as the date when both the novel and the Paige Typesetter might be finished. Again his calculations proved over-optimistic. But by sometime in March the holocaust of the Sand-Belt had burned itself out, and the author had brought the Yankee back to die in modern England, not by suicide as in his original plan, but still, in a way, yearning for his “lost land” (MTJB 130).

Baetzhold notes that he discovered these specific dates in a letter which Mark Twain wrote to Theodore Crane on October 5, 1888. By March, 1889, a discouraged Theodore, like the Connecticut Yankee, was contemplating suicide but was dissuaded from doing so by a letter from Thomas K. Beecher: “Such an act would not save Sue, but would load on her patient soul a life-long burden—a sense of having failed to satisfy you and give you peace” (MTA). Theodore Crane’s sudden stroke and painful ten month struggle before his July 3, 1889 death, most certainly had a direct effect, not only on Mark Twain’s schedule for completing *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*, but also on his decision to have the Yankee die from natural causes rather than from suicide. Clemens had been intimately involved in the hopeless effort to help Theodore recover. Most likely, Theodore had looked to him, as well as to Beecher, for advice on committing suicide. Clemens wrote to William Dean Howells on July 13, 1889, “It is heartbreaking to see Mrs. Crane. ... I do see that there is an argument against suicide: the grief of the worshipers left behind, the awful famine in their hearts, these are too costly terms for the release” (Paine 2:510). Obviously, Clemens also shared Mrs. Crane’s overwhelming sorrow and probably now felt a keener sense of mortality and of appreciation of loved ones.

The Clemenses were back at Quarry Farm with Susan when Theodore died. They “had come early, from Hartford expecting it; so Sue was not solitary on the mountain-top. It was a solace & a happiness to Theodore ...” (MTMF 264). This atmosphere seems to be reflected in the final chapter of *Yankee*:

I peeped in. The man lay on his back, in bed, talking brokenly but with spirit ... I spoke—merely a word, to call his attention. His glassy

eyes and his ashy face were alight in an instant with pleasure, gratitude, gladness, welcome: "O, Sandy, you are come at last—how I have longed for you! Sit by me—do not leave me again, Sandy, never again ... now all is well, all is peace, and I am happy again—we are happy again, isn't it so Sandy? (573)

The notice which Mark Twain had prepared appeared in the July 4th morning edition of the *Elmira Advertiser*:

DEATH OF THEODORE W. CRANE

His demise Occurred at 7 O'clock Last Evening:
Sketch of His Life.

Theodore W. Crane died at his residence on East Hill last evening at 7 o'clock, passing quietly away after two days of unconsciousness and a long illness. The news of Mr. Crane's death will be received with widespread regret. It is a blow not only to afflicted relatives and friends, but to Elmira as a city, for he was one of the representative men who give a place a reputation and a name.

... Theodore Crane was a thoroughly good man, as genial, charitable and whole souled as he was able and active in business. For a good many years, twenty at least, he was treasurer of the board of trustees of Park church. He was active and tireless in the work of building that magnificent edifice as he was in all church work and that society will sadly miss him.

Considering the evidence, one must conclude that Mark Twain's summer home in Elmira had all the ingredients for a place where people could thrive. Dixon Wecter's judgment of Theodore Crane was hasty and incorrect. Instead of being a mediocrity and an irritant, he turns out to be an intelligent, gentle, secure and contented man who was one of the essential ingredients enabling Mark Twain to work well. His un-

timely death at age fifty-eight occurred just before the period that Wecter rightly named “the downward spiral.”

The Lady Beloved

The details of this “downward spiral” have been well chronicled particularly by Justin Kaplan and Hamlin Hill. What has been less well chronicled is Susan Crane’s constant influence as the family mainstay. The “downward spiral” began with both the death of Theodore Crane and Mark Twain’s overindulgence in support of the Paige Typesetter, what Kaplan called, “his fatal addiction drowning his important goals in some 180 proof, hypomanic tipple of speculation” (252). Toward the end, the family was “strung together ... by tensions and interrelationships as taut as the limits of sanity and decorum would stretch them” (Hill 48). It was a period of overwhelming calamities: deteriorating health, financial disaster, the shock of Susy’s death in 1896, the onset of Jean’s epilepsy the same year, Livy’s heart attack in 1902 and death in 1904, and then Jean’s seizure and death by drowning in the bathtub on the day before Christmas of 1909.

Throughout this period, Susan Crane suffered and supported the family in its effort to maintain balance. She tried to support Clemens’ financial ventures; went with the Clemenses to Europe in 1891 and again after Susy’s death. When at home in Elmira, she was busy and productive while keeping in touch through regular correspondence.

Dixon Wecter endorsed letters as manuscripts that often provide us with the truest picture of the real people, without the posturing or the masks. With the exception of the early letters exchanged between young Sam Clemens and his mother, brother and sister and many of the love letters, those between Susan Crane and the Clemens family make the most authentic addition to the biography. A sampling of these letters together with details of Susan’s life during this time make it apparent that her strength of character served as a stabilizing influence on the Clemens family.

Shortly after Theodore’s death, Mark Twain had written, “Sue bears up under her calamity with a great and fine fortitude which I would call brave & heroic but that those words have lost the noble place that once was theirs, through the degradation of over-use & application to trivial instances” (MTMF 264). Louis Budd has characterized this period, beginning in the nineties, as the time “when Mark Twain (too) mounted into herohood” (OMT 28).

Judging from the exuberant tone of several notes and letters, it seems that Susan and Theodore Crane shared Mark Twain's enthusiasm for the Paige Typesetter. Mark Twain made the following notation in his notebook:

June 19, 1889 <[gave] >Susie L. Crane a paper agreeing (upon surrender <to me> of said paper) to deliver to her paid up stock representing a "One Five Hundreth" of the whole of the capital stock of the company which is to be organized to manufacture, and sell or rent Paige Compositor under the (American) patents, so soon as such company shall be formed and begin the issue of stock (N&J 3:493).

By October 17, 1889, organization had progressed and Susan received the actual "royalties" along with this optimistic projection:

Susie Dear, Put these in a safe place & wait, without any question at all they will be salable at \$50,000 within four years. We all send you powers & slathers of love and the same to Mother. Saml.

FLAG

citations for this quote and next?

And a week later, he once more wrote her, apparently in reply to a letter from Susan that must have conveyed complete faith in Clemens and for the typesetter project:

October 21, 1889 You dear Sue! It is lovely of you to talk so, & I mean to deserve it yet. I have patiently (pretty patiently) & contentedly spent more than \$3,000 a month on the machine for 44 consecutive months & my share of the profit on the very first (unasked) order from one single printing office is going to pay back every cent of it. ... I hope Theodore hovers about us & is still interested in our efforts & victories ... We all send a world of love to you Susie dear & to Mother. Saml.

Other cheerful and encouraging letters were exchanged during the following months. The Clemens family spent the summer of 1890 at the Onteora Club in the Catskill Mountains near Tannersville, New York. Susan was staying with her mother at 303 Main Street, where she had gone shortly after Theodore's death. By the fall of 1890, she was back home at Quarry Farm.

Susan's relationship with her nieces and nephew was one of mutual love and adoration. Dr. Ida Langdon, speaking at the Elmira College Convocation on October 13, 1962, said of her: "Aunt Sue' to all of us ... I despair of describing her. I can only pile up adjectives, but at least they are well-weighted adjectives. She was gentle, humorous, at times gay, responsive, understanding, tolerant, and very lovely to look at" (reprinted in MTE 53). Dr. Langdon's sentiments echo those that were written in a diary by her brother, Jervis Langdon, when he was thirteen years old:

Fri. Oct. 3, 1890, Julie, Ida and I went to the farm. Julie drove Bell. The farm looked delightful. I let some pigeons go. [He was raising carrier pigeons.] Aunt Susie was as lovely as ever. We stayed to lunch and had a glorious time (JLC).

Clara Clemens wrote of Susan in *My Father Mark Twain*:

Aunt Sue ... was the one person I have ever seen who appeared to be continually above and beyond the hurts inflicted by human existence. Father sometimes called her Saint Sue, and she returned the compliment by baptizing him Holy Samuel, though with a strong touch of humor in her tone of voice whenever she used this title. Aunt Sue adored Father's little bursts of temper and would laugh at him most heartily. Often he laughed with her, altering his vehement mood instantaneously to one of childlike mirth (reprinted in MTE 44).

Ten year old Jean Clemens received this delightfully encouraging letter from her Aunt Sue on October 8, 1890:

My dear Jean,

The sun, the trees, and the picture are all bright, and the loveliness is that of the spring time, nevertheless if you were here we could go to gather chestnuts. ... For years I have desired to have cows in the lower lot in front of the house, and in the lot opposite the house, but always there was something in the way, a crop of turnips, or carrots, hay or oats, more frequently some fence was down. But Mr. Rice and William have honored my return to the farm by removing all obsticals [sic] and putting the cows where I can see them ... I agree with your mother, that the very light asters are the prettiest. They are so delicate. I have used them three Sundays, twice with pink roses and people seemed to enjoy them.

Yesterday ... Jervis and his Professor, who is called "Dr. Herfel" came up and took some photographs. This morning I went to the barn with Miss Crane and William told us how you go over Billy's head and come out of the upper window. If you are not too big to do it next summer I want Jervis to get a picture of it. What a *dear* venturesome girl. Lovingly Aunt Sue

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citation for this quote?

The following is from a letter written on March 18, 1890, by Susy Clemens to Susan Crane. Susy had entered Bryn Mawr College the previous fall. Clearly, she too loved, admired and trusted her Aunt Sue.

Some day when I have learned to sacrifice myself and do my duty faithfully I may attain the self-mastery, and self-possession which I so admire in you. I see now that the causes of my many savage moods were lack of earnestness in living with a definite purpose placed before all other things, and a lack of sense of eternity or any of the great things which ought to subordinate the small in one's mind.

I awakened suddenly to the consciousness that by emotionalizing and fussing and fuming over the trivial things of not even temporal importance, simply for the sake of indulging myself in sensation, I was gradually eliminating my soul...The soul deals not with narrow, trammeling matters. I should like to realize that it is not only my duty but my privilege to suffer all and do all that I can for others in this world. But, oh! One's horrible earthly weaknesses! There's the trouble.

It is hard to control them ... Tomorrow I am eighteen! Eighteen! I dread to say I am so old! And nothing done and such unsettled notions of things. Why, I should be a well-poised woman instead of a rattlebrained girl. I should have been entirely settled and in mechanical running order for two years! I am ashamed I am not a more reliable, serene character, one to be depended upon. I know so well what a girl of eighteen should be (reprinted in MTFM 128).

By the spring of 1891, Susy Clemens had withdrawn from college and according to Paine “was far from well.” Livy had been diagnosed as having “some disturbance of the heart” and Clemens was bothered by rheumatism. A “long European sojourn” to the famous health spas was selected as a way to remedy the health problems and ease the burden of their strained financial situation which included the high cost of maintaining the Hartford house (Paine 11:919). Young Jervis Langdon's 1891 diary records Susan Crane's departure with the Clemenses: “Sat. June 6 Aunt Susie sailed this morning at 5 o'clock on 'La Gascogne' [sic] from N.Y. Mon. June 14 Received a cable gram from Uncle Sam saying very comfortable voyage'” (JLC).

Susan returned home in mid-September, 1892, after having enjoyed visits to the rejuvenating health spas and European cultural sites. The Clemens family remained in Europe for the next fluctuant three years while Clemens commuted back and forth across the ocean in efforts to salvage their investments (Paine 11:953). During one of these

discouraging business trips in the spring of 1893, he made a poignant confession to the ever understanding Susan:

I dreamed I was born & grew up & was a pilot on the Mississippi & a miner & a journalist in Nevada & a pilgrim in the *Quaker City* & had a wife & children & went to live in a villa at Florence and this dream goes on & on & sometimes seems so real that I almost believe it is real. I wonder if it is? But there is no way to tell, for if one applies tests they would be part of the dream, too, & so would simply aid the deceit. I wish I knew whether it is a dream or real (Paine 11:964).

And back in New York again that fall, he wrote to Livy:

I wrote Sue telling her I had no shame, for the boat was sinking—send me \$5,000 if she possibly could ... Next morning Sue’s letter came, saying she had no money, & no bonds or other securities salable in New York, but that she had exchanged securities with Ida [Mrs. Charles Langdon] & would send \$5,000 worth of negotiable bonds [sic] ... I telegraphed thanking Sue & Ida & saying everything was all right, at present (LL, 270).

Clemens’s Webster Publishing Company closed on April 18, 1894 and by November, the Paige Typesetter project had ended, leaving the Clemens family \$190,000 in debt (MTFM 147). They returned to Quarry Farm in May, 1895, for two months of rest and planning for the lecture trip that would restore their financial security. Part of the plan was that Clara would travel with her parents while Susy and Jean would remain with their Aunt Sue at Quarry Farm. This time, twenty-three year old Susy Clemens hoped to benefit from the Quarry Farm environment: “an Italian singing teacher had advised her to live on a hill... and gather vigor of body, preparatory to studying for grand opera in Paris” (LL,315). Jean was fifteen years old and would attend The Park Place School. The

school prepared its students for “the best colleges for women” and was located in Observatory Hall at Elmira Female College. “The circular for 1894-1895 stressed health as well as scholarship and promised ‘particular attention to the requirements of the best society’” (EC 133).

Mark Twain’s famous lecture tour to major American and Canadian cities, Australia, New Zealand, India, Ceylon and Africa began from Quarry Farm on July 14, 1895. Susy’s correspondence with her family during their trip reported that life at the farm went on “pleasantly evenly and absolutely uneventfully” (MTFM 161).

Susy had left Quarry Farm and was visiting the Charles Dudley Warners in Hartford when she became ill and died of spinal meningitis on August 18, 1896. This letter was written by Clemens to Susan on September 30, 1896:

Oh, oh, oh, dear Sue. I cannot believe it, cannot realize it, cannot accept it! It is a dream & will pass & Susy will come again. You were good to Susy. She made it hard for you, but you did not let that swerve you; you stood by her, aunt & sister you have always been to her & to us. We are daily & hourly grateful, Dear Sue, that you were with her in those final awful hours when her sunny life went out in storm & darkness.

May you not lack such a friend if ever you come to die. With the ocean between you and those that are nearest your heart. With love & gratitude, S. L. C. (MTP)

Susy’s spinal meningitis and sudden death headed the list of what Kaplan has called the “grim inventories” of ailments that caused Clemens, during the last twenty years of his life to develop “with considerable justification, a sense of horrible nemesis.” To this list, including his own failing health, was added Jean’s epilepsy, Clara’s nervous breakdowns, and Livy’s hyperthyroid heart disease (247).

In response to a word of encouragement from Susan, Clemens wrote on December 22, 1899: “Dear Sue, it is good of you to call me Holy, I sometimes feel that I am not as holy as I ought to be, though I

am cheered by the thought that I am holier than the other people. With love, Saml" (MTP)

Clemens described the relief and comfort found by a winter visit to Quarry Farm on January 20, 1902:

Clara dear, Mrs. Clemens is pretty well fagged out, & is lying on the sofa here in the parlor gossiping with Mrs. Crane, & has instructed me to write you & say Jean was bad all day long & until the middle of dinner this evening. She lay in the stateroom on the train all the journey, & was persistently absent. The day's anxiety not the journey is what has made your mother so tired; for the day was beautiful & bright & the spread of fields & hills pure white with unmarred snow ... This region is sumptuously clothed in snow, & is very beautiful under the moonlight; the town lights make as fine a picture as ever. This yard glows with intense sparks, fascinating to the eye & the spirit—facets of snow smitten by the moonbeams. Mrs. Crane & Mrs. Clemens your mother are still gossiping and happy—skinning the Elmirians. Uncle Chollely [sic] & Aunt Ida received us at the station with a very heart-warming welcome. We came up the hill in gubernatorial style in five sleighs (LL 332).

During the years of the “downward spiral,” Susan Crane was a leader in two important philanthropic causes. From 1893 until 1895, she served as president of the board of trustees of the Industrial Training School. The school located at the corner of Church Street and Madison Avenue in Elmira had been founded in 1880 in order to enable needy children to learn trades in order to eventually become self-supporting.

The work of the American Association of Medical Milk Commissions to promote the “universally important cause of sound milk” is a documented part of medical and agricultural history, particularly in the *U. S. Department of Agriculture Bulletins*. Susan Crane was at the forefront of this effort to establish standards for clean milk with her experimental

dairy, which she established in 1902 under the supervision of the Elmira Academy of Medicine and its Milk Commission. Representing Elmira at a national convention of the American Association of Medical Milk Commissions in Atlantic City, June 3, 1907, Dr. Ross Loop reported on the Quarry Farm Dairy:

The air is pure and comparatively free from dust, the drainage is exceptional, and there is an abundance of pure spring water. Amid these surroundings the new dairy house was erected and the new plan put in operation. Our first certificate was issued April 15, 1903 ... Without the aid and supervision of expert dairymen, but with only ordinary farm hands, our bacterial limit has been exceeded but twice in the four years of operation. The product is used exclusively by private families, no hospitals or institutions taking it. A large part of the output is used in infant and sick feeding, being recommended by physicians...there has been a gradual increase to 180 quarts per day. The price was eight cents per quart, at a loss, until this spring when it advanced to ten cents...In this cost is included the fees of the experts, who are paid by the dairyman, and the expense of tuberculin tests...our dairy has never allowed advertising.

Susan's dairy continued as the only farm in Elmira producing certified milk until 1919. Eventually, milk from Quarry Farm Dairy was sold on several railroad cars, but most often milk was used for people who were ill or in need. One other Elmiran, Dr. Martha Anstice Harris, dean and professor of English and Literature at Elmira College, produced certified milk around 1915 at her summer home, Hillcrest Farm, which was located in Martinsburg, New York. In noting the accomplishments of the Elmira Academy of Medicine at its centennial celebration in 1936, Dr. Loop said: "Mrs. Susan Crane's Quarry Farm Dairy complied with the strict requirements of Certified Milk and Elmira became the first small town in the world to enjoy the boon of clean, wholesome

milk ... This movement finally resulted in a general improvement in the quality and purity of market milk.”

On August 12, 1902, Livy Clemens suffered a “massive seizure” while vacationing at York Harbor, Maine (GF 46). On August 15th, Susan responded to Clemens’s telegram: “Susy dear—Livy wants you” and went immediately to Maine (MTP). By July, 1903, Livy’s health seemed to be improving as she recuperated at Quarry Farm. Clemens reported to his friend the Rev. Joseph Twichell: “Livy is coming along; eats well, sleeps some, is mostly very gay, not very often depressed; spends all day on the porch, sleeps there part of the night, makes excursions in carriage & wheel-chair; &, in the matter of superintending everything & everybody, has resumed business at the old stand” (Paine letters II:741). That September, Livy wrote a brief note to Clemens who was in New York City making preparations for their trip to Italy where they hoped for even greater improvement in her health: “Youth Darling ... Dear heart will you ask them at the hotel ... about their milk, whether it is certified etc. If we are not sure about it we better have Briarcliff leave us a quart a day” (LL 346.)

Livy died in Florence, Italy on June 5, 1904. Two letters from Susan Crane express her tremendous grief as well as her concern for her brother-in-law:

June 10, 1904

Dear Mr. Clemens,

All day, and all night, my heart asks, how are they living the weary hours through? And all the hours I am loving and longing to help, that is, to do the impossible it all seems. Oh! our dear beautiful Livy on whom we all depended, whom we all so loved, it cannot be possible that she is hidden from us. You who have been privileged to minister and to catch the last words and breaths of her love, and truth, and greatness, can realize better than I, she was so alive to each of us, that she will always be alive, and loving, since we cannot lose out of our lives anything so good, and blessed as her love. It is ours so long as we have consciousness, and thereby we are rich. You are so especially rich,

even now, for how Livy loved, & lived in and for you. I cannot write, you cannot read, but come and let us all love you and do for you, will you try to live. To me there was a breath of comfort in the “homeward bound” from you, as if there was a shadow of home sense left, and may the ocean breath [sic] peace upon your dear spirit. Lovingly, “Aunt Sue” (MTP)

Shortly after Livy's funeral, which was conducted by the Rev. Joseph Twichell in the parlor of the Langdon house, Susan wrote on July 18, 1904:

Dear Mr. Clemens,

Since your coming has made the tragedy all so real that I cannot escape the consciousness. It seems more unendurable. Everyday the thought grows heavier and the motive for living so gone out of life. If so with me, what must it be for you to try to go on?

It was a great, an unspeakable comfort to see you so natural, so yourself, and inclined to talk of Livy, of whom you are thinking all the time. I had feared you would shut yourself within yourself, and never allow us to speak of her to you or allow us to try even to carry you and your heavy load ... In October, when you went away, I was sure that it was the right, and only thing to do and that Livy would improve; And all winter one fear haunted me; that you would go first. Nor could I for a moment understand how she could exist without you. This was one of my anxieties for her, and I am most thankful she was not obliged to carry the weight of sorrow even for one day. How she loved you! and how richly she felt your love. She was so sure and she had a right to the assurance. I hope you will rest in the conviction that she was royally blest in your love, and that all, all who ever

saw you together accounted you to be a perfect husband, a perfect lover.

I do not believe that you nor I, nor anyone close, knew such power to do, to be, and to suffer, as Livy illustrated, and it breaks my heart to think how little she could be helped at last. How I could not help at all ... Lovingly yours,
Susan L. Crane (MTP)

Susan's steadfast relationship with the Clemens family continued after Livy's death. In 1905, she spent a week with them at their New York apartment at 21 5th Avenue (GF 99). At that time, Clemens presented her with an inscribed pen and ink portrait: "Feb. 21/05 To Susy Crane The Lady Beloved—from 'The Holy Samuel'" (ECMTA).

When the Clemens family moved to their new home, Stormfield, Susan wrote her congratulations on August 9, 1908 and added:

To me anchorage seems most desirable as the years go by. This you can have at Redding, going South whenever you need or wish to.

I am sure Clara & Jean will enjoy the country home, within so easy reach of the heart things—which interest and are important ...

Jean wrote me recently, cheerfully of the decided gain in her health and her interest in the sea and the drives. Yours most lovingly,
Susan L. Crane (MTP)

These last two letters written by Susan Crane to Clemens at the time of Jean's death speak for themselves and are convincing evidence of their close and sustaining relationship. Jean died December 24, 1909; the first letter was written on December 24, 1909:

Dear Mr. Clemens,

You are so far away, but are in all my thoughts in a sad, painful way, and with a hopeless longing to comfort you, where there seems little comfort.

I know how you will bear this shock, as you bear all the blows that fall, like a hero. One thought we must have in common, a thankfulness for the poor child released. Yes and there is another argument for thankfulness—in the fact that you have been an absolutely indulgent father to Jean. Set this fact to be a comfort. And we here will seek to do all that we can do, as Livy would have it done ...

Since you returned feeling less strong and well, I have thought what a pity that I cannot give to you all my life & health, and slip away as Jean has—Dear Jean! What fine, noble qualities of head & heart she had, and how bravely she had taken hold of her life to fill her place in the home ... I wanted to tell her how happy I was in her ability to help you, to company you, and direct without and within. Most lovingly yours,
Susan L. Crane (MTP)

Clemens's own poor health prevented him from travelling to Elmira for Jean's funeral, but Susan reported the details including a Park Church Sunday School teacher's description of Jean: "She was one of the unforgettable ones." Her letter continued with a forceful effort of assistance:

... Katy [Leary, the Clemens' Elmira-born long-time housekeeper] tells me you blame yourself for Jean's long absence from home—[receiving treatments in a nursing home] Do not, do not; anymore. For at every turn you were doing what by the best advice obtainable you considered was for her good. And she did improve, so that even she came to feel that good had come to her through her experiences away from home.

You cannot see as one a little apart can, how you have illustrated a compassion akin to the divine. You have been lavish in the expen-

diture of material good, and most patient and loving, all for Jean! Who richly deserved it all, and the blessed emancipation which has set her free.

I do not wonder that you mourn the loss of the child, and are lonely, but I cannot bear to have you condemn yourself for anything you have done or failed to do.

After giving to you every hour of every day, loving sympathy, I do long next to have you free from these burdensome thoughts of upbraiding.

With more tender, loving thoughts of sorrow for you than can be written or spoken. I lay no burden of writing upon you, remember this! ... And now a loving goodbye, Susan L. Crane (MTP)

Conclusion

Susan Crane lived until August 29, 1924, outliving her husband by thirty-five years, her sister by twenty years, and Mark Twain by fourteen years. She continued for the rest of her life to exude a strength, a resilience, and a joy in living. In a memorial tribute to her, the Rev. Albert G. Cornwall said: "Her attitude toward the changing conceptions of truth was a perpetual source of wonder and of joy to me. She never closed her mind. Truth to her was always something infinitely broader and deeper and bigger than the mere statements by which for the time being we express it" (*Elmira Star Gazette*, September 1, 1924). Mark Twain's words about Susan Crane can be found in an undated *Elmira Star Gazette* article by Frank Tripp entitled, "*Beecher and Twain.*" The words express sentiments that most surely included Theodore Crane and, "love to all the jolly household:"

It is such a comfort to me to know if I do chance to wind up in the fiery pit hereafter, she will flutter down there every day, in defiance of law and the customs of the country, and bring ice and fans, and all sorts of contraband things, and sit there by the hour cheering me up, and

then go back home not caring two cents that her scorched feathers and dilapidated appearance and brimstone smell are going to get her into trouble, and cause her to be shunned by all proper angels as an eccentric and disreputable saint.

I can believe a good deal of the Bible, but I will never believe a heaven can be devised that will keep Susy Crane from spending most of her time in Hell, trying to comfort the poor devils down there.

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Chapter Twelve

Samuel and Olivia

1870-1872

Olivia Louise Langdon and Samuel Langhorne Clemens married on February 2nd, 1870 in the Langdon home in Elmira, New York. Mary Mason Fairbanks, who first met Samuel Clemens aboard the Quaker City, attended the wedding and noted that the “quiet, impressive ceremony with all its beautiful appointments is sacred to the few who witnessed it.” As the first year of marriage progressed, however, many challenges awaited the newlyweds. On August 6th, Olivia’s father died in Elmira. On September 29th, Emma Nye died in the Clemenses’ home in Buffalo. On November 7th, Samuel and Olivia’s first child, Langdon, was born prematurely. The following pieces highlight three of these events.

Mark Twain’s 115th Wedding Anniversary

Published in the Mark Twain Society Bulletin (Vol. VIII, No. 2), July, 1985, pp. 2-3, this article commemorates the 115th wedding anniversary of Samuel Clemens to Olivia Langdon. The article, written by Mary Mason Fairbanks and published in the Cleveland Daily Herald on February 7, 1870, was not widely available in the 1980s. Transcription of this article was credited to Mary Boewe, and the reprint was shared “as an anniversary present” to the readers of the Mark Twain Society Bulletin. The Introduction to the article in the Bulletin included the following comments:

An event to remember in this year of Mark Twain celebrations is the 115th anniversary of his marriage to Olivia Langdon in Elmira on February 2, 1870. The ceremony held in the Langdon home on the corner of Main and Church Streets attracted little attention in the Elmira newspapers. A brief notice read, “Mr. SAMUEL L. CLEMENS, one of the editors of the Buffalo Express, and well known as “MARK TWAIN,” and Miss OLIVIA LANGDON, daugh-

ter of JERVIS LANGDON, Esq., were married at the residence of the bride's father in this city, last evening."

The Rev. Thomas K. Beecher also recorded the event in the records of Park Church, where the entry is now on display.

Among the wedding guests was a friend of Mark Twain's who was also a newspaper writer. Mrs. Mary Fairbanks was one of the passengers on the Quaker City cruise, covering the event for her husband's newspaper. She "adopted" a group of "young cubs" including Charles Langdon and Sam Clemens, who called her "Mother Fairbanks." Their close friendship lasted until her death. She was his confidant in his courtship of Livy and it would have been unthinkable for her not to have attended the wedding.

We cannot tell if there was a conflict between her concept of the role of friend and guest and her instincts as a newspaper woman, but we may be glad that the latter role prevailed.

The Wedding of "Mark Twain"

by Mary Mason Fairbanks

The following article was transcribed by Mary Boewe, a native of New York State living in Kentucky [at the time of this publication in 1985]. She is a graduate of SUNY Brockport and has a Master's Degree in American Literature from Syracuse University. She taught in the public schools for nearly two decades. She and her family lived in Pakistan, Iran, and India. She is the author of several articles and has been working on a biography of Olivia Langdon Clemens, doing extensive research in the Mark Twain Papers at the University of California Berkeley. She transcribed the following article by Mary Mason Fairbanks on the wedding of Mark Twain and Livy.

Samuel L. Clemens, more widely known as "Mark Twain," was married on the evening of the 2nd inst. to Miss Olivia L. Langdon, daughter of Jervis Langdon, Esq of Elmira, N.Y. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Thos. K. Beecher of that city, assisted by the Rev. Joseph E. [sic] Twichell, of Hartford, CT. There was no "Jenkins" among the guests to give publicity to all the pretty detail of the occasion. Suffice it that the sweet-faced girl who that evening hid her blushes in the folds of her bridal veil, has been reared in a household whose very atmosphere

is love and refinement, and the humorous author, with all his rapidly increasing popularity, has received no endorsement which can compare with the cordial surrender of this treasure to his keeping.

The quiet, impressive ceremony with all its beautiful appointments is sacred to the few who witnessed it, but “Mark Twain” belongs to the public which has the right to know that he filled the role of bridegroom with charming grace and dignity.

Through the politeness of the President of the Pennsylvania Northern Central road, a Director’s car was sent on from Baltimore and placed at Mr. Langdon’s disposal, while the Superintendent of the N.Y. Central supplemented the complimentary arrangement by orders for its conveyance to Buffalo. The wedding party, including a number of invited guests, proceeded to Buffalo on Thursday. Mark, arrogating to himself a considerable amount of artificial dignity in consequence of his new position, and the magnificence of his “trousseau” to which he attached much importance.

Here comes in a delicious bit of romance which as a reporter we have no right to give, but which, holding it too good to keep, we venture to share with the friends of Mark Twain in this city.

It had been arranged that Mr. and Mrs. Clemens should proceed at once to their boarding house, on arriving in the city, while the rest of the party were to be domiciled at the “Tift [sic] House.” The securing of a desirable, genteel home in a private family, had been delegated to an intimate friend and resident of Buffalo, who understanding the tastes and requirements of the young couple would of course be the best person to make for them judicious arrangements. Mr. Clemens having been absent on his lecturing tour for the past few months, accepted the assurance that everything had been attended to. At the depot hearty “good nights” were exchanged, the larger party driving to the hotel, the bride and groom taking carriage for more quiet quarters. Stopping in front of a modest but very attractive brick house in the upper part of Delaware street, Mr. Clemens was somewhat surprised to be met in the hall by the father and mother of the bride and his own sister, whom he supposed already quartered at the hotel. The landlady of the house suddenly disappeared from the scene, and as leaf by leaf of the charming little drama unfolded, Mark Twain found himself the victim of what he termed “a first class swindle,” the proprietors and abettors of which were the delighted father and mother, who stood there silent spectators of the happiness they had prepared for their children in the gift of this

beautiful home. For once the fun-loving Mark failed in repartee, and moistened eyes spoke a deeper thanks than words.

Nothing that love or wealth could suggest or supply was wanting to make the scene the fulfillment of the poet's dream, from the delicate blue satin drawing room to the little sanctum quite apart, with its scarlet upholstery, amid the pretty adornments of which inspiration must often come to its happy occupant.

Long life and happy days to our young friends, whose morning sky gives such rosy promise.

The Tragic Story of Emma Nye

by Herbert A. Wisbey, Jr.

Published in the Mark Twain Society Bulletin (Vol. XIV, No. 2), July, 1991, pp. 1-4. At the time, Dr. Wisbey was co-editor of the Mark Twain Society Bulletin, Professor of History, Elmira College Archivist, and Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies.

A distraught Mark Twain wrote to his brother, Orion, in September, 1870 that Emma Nye, a school friend of his wife, was dying of typhoid fever in their own bed in their Buffalo home. On September 29, 1870 she died. It was one of a series of tragic events that the newlyweds had suffered since their marriage in February. First, Livy's father, Jervis Langdon, died in Elmira after weeks of painful illness. Livy herself, always in precarious health, was pregnant with their first child, born prematurely on November 7. Mark Twain himself was struggling to adapt to the new job of editor of the *Buffalo Express* and trying to complete his second major book, *Roughing It*.

Olivia Langdon Clemens and Emma Nye were born in Elmira within two months of each other; Livy on November 27, 1845 and Emma in January, 1846. Emma's father and mother came to Elmira in the mid-1840's, about the same time as Jervis Langdon. Unlike Jervis Langdon, however, George M. Nye was not successful. He tried manufacturing tubing for railroads and for many years had a variety store or "Bazaar" selling "fancy goods and Yankee notions." The family lived in a house owned by his wife's mother on the corner of Main and Second Streets. Interest-

ingly, it was the first home of the Langdon family in Elmira after they moved from Ithaca. George Nye himself never owned any property in Elmira. Emma had an older sister, Mary, and a younger brother and sister.

The Nye house was next door to that of Henry C. Spaulding who had two daughters about the same ages as the Nye girls. The two houses were not far from the Langdon's home on East Union Street and in the same block after Jervis Langdon bought the large house on the corner of Main and Church Streets in 1862. Livy, the Nye girls and the Spaulding girls were part of a group of friends who were neighbors, schoolmates, and members of the same Sunday School class.

Jervis and Olivia Langdon were charter members and major supporters of the Congregational Church (renamed the Park Church in 1871). Livy joined the church by profession of faith at the age of thirteen in 1858. Emma Nye was twenty when she joined the church, also by profession of faith, in August, 1886. Her mother had been a member for several years but her father never joined. Mrs. Julia Beecher, wife of the minister, Thomas K. Beecher, many years later recalled her first Sunday School class "consisting of Alice and Clara and Fidelity, Ella, two Emmas, Jenny, Olivia and four Marys." The Olivia was Olivia Langdon, of course. Alice and Clara were Spauldings. One of the Emmas, one of the Marys, and possibly the Jenny were Nyes. The other Emma was Emma Sayles, another close friend of Livy's. The other names are subject to speculation.

Both Livy and Emma began attending Miss Thurston's Elmira Seminary when they were only a few months short of five years old. They went to the private school from 1850 to at least 1858. It was a boarding school, but it also took day students. The courses offered ranged from basic elementary to college preparatory. The school was located in the large mansion on Main Street a block north of the Nye house and within easy walking distance of the Langdon's home on East Union Street. Livy continued her education after Miss Thurston's school in the Preparatory Department of the newly-opened Elmira Female College, entering as a boarding student at the beginning of the second semester in February, 1859. Emma Nye and her sister Mary attended Elmira Free Academy, organized in May of that year. The first classes were held in the basement of the Congregational Church, a wooden building located on the site of the present Park Church. The Nyes probably could not afford even the modest tuition charges at the college. The first Elmira Free Academy building opened in the spring of 1862, a year after Mary Nye graduated.

Emma Nye was able to go to school in the new building, graduating in 1864. She was living at home with her family in Elmira when the State Census was taken in June, 1865.

Evidently her education qualified her to teach school. On April 7, 1866, Olivia Lewis Langdon, Livy's mother, wrote in her diary, "Emma Nye returned from her school in Port Jervis this morning. This evening she, Alice and Clara Spaulding spent with Livia." Emma must have visited Livy frequently in the period from about 1861 to 1864 when Livy was bedridden at home. Livy's geography book, signed by her and dated August, 1863 has "Miss Emma Nye" written in pencil on the back cover, one of three names of friends scribbled there.

In 1869, the Nyes decided to leave Elmira and move to Aiken, South Carolina. That year, the estate of Mrs. Nye's mother, who had died earlier, was settled and the house in which they had been living was sold. The sale, completed in November, 1870, brought \$4,000 in cash, divided between Catherine Nye and the children of a deceased sister. Perhaps this modest inheritance enabled the family to move to South Carolina.

Aiken is located 56 miles southwest of Columbia, South Carolina, at the edge of the Piedmont. Its healthy climate attracted planters from Charleston before the Civil War and after the war it was promoted as a health resort accessible by train. The Nye family may have moved to Aiken for reasons of their own health or to take advantage of business opportunities created by a rapidly increasing number of people attracted by the mild winter climate.

Olivia Langdon was a sensitive young lady and felt badly about her friend moving away. In November, 1869 she wrote to Alice Day, a friend in Hartford, "There has been another departure in the neighborhood. Mr. Nye's family have moved to Aiken in South Carolina. Mr. Nye failed in business. Emma and Mary were all a good deal out of health, and it seemed best and necessary for them to make some change. It seemed very hard for them to go away from their home of twenty years—to take up a new life among strangers and particularly at their stage of life—as I bade them good bye the feeling was strong upon me of how much [illegible] sun shine falls in my life than in most lives"

Emma went South with her family and was recorded in Aiken with them in the Census of 1870. She was living in Detroit, Michigan in December, 1868 with the family of Mr. and Mrs. John Sill and probably teaching in his private academy for young ladies there. John Sill had been

the first superintendent of the Detroit public schools and later had a distinguished career as an educator and diplomat. At Livy's repeated urging, Mark Twain called on Emma Nye at the Sill home while in Detroit for a lecture and enjoyed a visit of more than two hours discussing Livy. Livy had evidently confided to Emma that she was often tired when she had to get up for breakfast, prompting Mark Twain to write urging her to sleep later and to take care of herself.

Emma planned to return to Detroit in the fall of 1870, and, after spending the summer at home in Aiken, she headed North, visiting friends in Elmira and possibly attending the funeral of Jervis Langdon who died on August 6. Livy was terribly upset after her father's death and could not sleep. Since Buffalo was on the way to her job in Detroit, Emma went home with Livy to help out. Here she came down with typhoid fever, probably contracted in Aiken. Although she had the best medical care available, and Livy nursed her herself although she was six months pregnant with her first child, Emma Nye died on September 29. She was only twenty-four years old.

Sadly, while Emma was so desperately sick in Buffalo, her nine-year-old sister, Jennie, was also sick with typhoid fever in Aiken. On September 3rd, Emma's father wrote to her at the Detroit address telling her of her sister's illness. The symptoms he described—high fever, abdominal discomfort, diarrhea, cough, weight loss, hallucinations,—are those of typhoid fever. The letter was forwarded to the Clemens address in Buffalo, but we do not know if Emma received it or was able to read it. Jennie did recover and eventually married although she “died in the early years of her happy married life.” The Nye family returned to Elmira where George M. Nye died in 1900 at the age of 85. His wife, Catherine Nye, lived to be almost 95, dying in 1913.

Emma's body was brought back to Elmira to the Spaulding house, next door to her former home. Her funeral was held in the Congregational Church with Thomas K. Beecher conducting the service. She is buried in the Second Street Cemetery where her father and mother joined her so many years later.

The death of Emma Nye in the Clemens's “own bed” was perhaps the worst in a series of unhappy events that colored Mark Twain's and Livy's attitude towards Buffalo. Mark Twain was not happy trying to settle in to the routine work of editor of the *Buffalo Express*. He was trying to find time to work on the manuscript of *Roughing It* and to make life as pleasant as possible for Livy, pregnant and away from family and

friends for the first time in her life. She had felt a sense of guilt when the Nyes moved away from Elmira and it is not surprising that the death of her friend brought on a deep depression that disturbed her husband, who was always concerned about her fragile health. That Livy recovered from this as well as the death of her father and the premature birth of her son, and even the baby's death nineteen months later, shows that she was much stronger, physically and emotionally, than was believed. It took a strong person to survive as the wife of Samuel L. Clemens for thirty-four years.

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Elmira College Mark Twain Archives.

“He Was So Rarely Beautiful”: Langdon Clemens

by Barbara E. Snedecor

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Langdon had been ill; he was finally diagnosed with diphtheria. He died on June 2. Samuel and Olivia were devastated.

Michael Kiskis' spare prose underscores the severity of Olivia and Samuel Clemens' loss of their firstborn child—a son, Langdon Clemens. Olivia, too weak to travel to Elmira for the burial, remained in Hartford, and Samuel felt he could not leave his wife alone. So it was that nineteen months after his birth, Langdon Clemens was buried—with no parents in attendance—near his recently deceased grandfather and namesake in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Elmira “after being laid out in the parlor of the Langdon home in Elmira, the same parlor in which the Clemenses were married.” Kiskis contemplatively suggests, “Absent parents are ubiquitous throughout Clemens' major fiction. It's not unreasonable to think that that absence was driven by Clemens' sending off his first born to face the grave alone.”¹ Perhaps this is so. What is clear, however, is that letters written by Samuel and Olivia offer insight into the life and death of Langdon Clemens and underscore the impact of their firstborn on both parents.

Viewed within the context of the nineteenth century, Langdon's death is statistically and sadly one of many childhood deaths of that day. The mortality rate for the 1870s indicates that 175 of every 1000 children died in infancy.² Samuel and Olivia were already acquainted with death. Of Samuel's seven siblings, only three survived to maturity. Additionally, just two months before Langdon's death, Emma Nye, Olivia's girlhood friend, died of typhoid in the Clemens' home in Buffalo. Olivia's father had passed away three months before Langdon's birth. Loss had repeatedly visited them; so, too, with Langdon's birth, had muted joy.

As we examine letters by Samuel Clemens during the period of their firstborn's life, we garner an understanding of his early reactions to fatherhood. Much later in life, Clemens revealed his burden of guilt connected with his son's death. Lesser known, however, are the responses of Olivia to the life and death of her only son. While Samuel bore the anguish of Langdon's death in silence for almost thirty-four years—and then made bare his remorse during an autobiographical dictation in 1906 further corroborated by W. D. Howells in his 1910 *My Mark Twain*—Olivia shared her feelings of loss at the time of their son's death. Her delight at Langdon's birth followed by her grief at his death is revealed in letters written to her sister, Susan Crane; to her sister-in-law, Mollie Clemens; and to her husband. Her various statements, paired with those of Clemens, offer insight into the early parenting years of Samuel and Olivia.

Langdon Clemens arrived almost a month early on November 7, 1870. A Western Union telegram to the new grandmother in Elmira an-

nounced his birth and reported “mother & child doing well.”³ Five days later, in a letter written by Clemens in the voice of his son to Hartford friends the Reverend Joseph and Harmony Twichell, Langdon explains the circumstances leading to his early arrival. He “was not due here ~~to~~ on this planet until ~~some~~ about the first week in December, but my mother took a hurried drive to the depot one day & the consequence was that it was all the doctors & nurses could do to keep me from looking in on the family that night. By faithful exertions,” the newborn reports, “they got me staved off till two weeks, & by jings I missed the earthquake.” Here Langdon suggests that a drive to the train depot—possibly strenuous—with fellow *Quaker City* passenger Mary Mason Fairbanks on October 19, one day before an earthquake occurred in the northeast and north central portion of the continent, was the catalyst that eventually led to his early birth. Langdon adds, “At birth I only weighed 4 1/2 pounds ~~wt~~ with my clothes on—& the clothes were the chief feature of the weight, too, I am obliged to confess” (4:236-37). Samuel Clemens shared this premature birth statistic with his son. Born two months early on November 30, 1835, in Florida, Missouri, Clemens, like Langdon, looked, at least by his mother’s account, to be an infant of “no promise.”⁴ The new father likely recognized in his infant son’s early arrival his own tentative entrance into life.

Letters written by Samuel Clemens during the first week of Langdon’s life reveal a variety of emotions from humorous whimsy, to anxiety, to fear that the child will not last through the week. Following the Western Union telegram mentioned earlier, in a short note combining business with birth, Clemens acknowledges the receipt of a check from his publisher and “Friend” Elisha Bliss and, combining New Testament scriptural overtones with disquiet, states, “Born to us this day, a boy. Mother & child doing only tolerably well but we hope for the best” (4:226). In another exchange, Clemens sets aside his assigned task to send dispatches of election night returns in Buffalo to *New York Tribune* journalist Whitelaw Reid, reporting to Reid that he is, instead, “confined at home, to-day, giving the weight of my experience to the care of our new baby” (4:228). Writing to his “Dear Bro,” Orion Clemens, four days after Langdon’s birth, Samuel lists the financial pressures of domesticity coupled with his forced inactivity due to his role as new father. He also expresses concern over his son’s health:

But And I am looking for a heavy bills to come in during the next few weeks—a four hundred-dollar doctor's bill, a sixty-dollar nurse bill, a hundred & seventy-dollars sleigh-bill, a two-hundred dollar life insurance bill, a three-hundred dollar carpenter's bill, & a dozen or two of twenty-five dollar debts, & we owe the servants seven hundred dollars which they can call for at any time—& I am sitting still with idle hands—for Livy is very sick & I do not believe the baby will live five days. (4:230)

Anxiety hovers in his report.

In two letters following, one to the lecture agent, James Redpath, on November 12 and another to the author Jesse Haney, publisher of *The Comic Monthly*, on the 14th, Clemens expresses caution with regard to printing humorous references to his son's birth. To Redpath, Clemens offers mixed feelings of consolation and anxiety, stating that he knew "you'd print the dispatch—but next morning the little stranger's health was so precarious that I thought I would try to stop the publication, merely on his mother's account, for if he was taken away, all printed jokes about him would grate upon her feelings of course" (4:235-36). To Haney, Clemens revisits this same concern. "I don't mind being caricatured myself," he writes, "but don't put in my baby. If I was sure it was going to live, I wouldn't care, but its health is so precarious that I hardly dare utter a pleasantry about the little fellow lest he pass from us & leave it looking ghastly in print" (4:238). Clemens' references to his son as "the little stranger" along with his use of the pronoun "it" suggest a distancing from his frail, newborn son.

Two letters, one to great-grandma Eunice Ford on November 11 and another to Joseph and Harmony Twichell on the 12th show Clemens affecting the voice of his son to create imaginative, humorous observations on Langdon's behalf. To his great-grandma, Langdon admits that he is "not entirely satisfied with my complexion. I am as red as a lobster. I am really ashamed to see company." With dismay, Langdon adds: "Colic. Everything a is colic. A baby can't open its mouth about the simplest matter but up comes some wise body & says it is *wind in its bowels*" (4:233). To the Twichells, Langdon admits, "Life seems a serious thing, what I have seen of it—& as my observation teaches me that it is made

up mainly of hiccups, disagreeable unnecessary washings, & wind in the bowels" (MTLs 4:237). These references, light and whimsical as they are, indirectly acknowledge the adjustments that accompany parenthood.

By November 19, twelve days following Langdon's birth, Clemens writes his mother-in-law, Olivia Lewis Langdon, hoping she will arrive soon in Buffalo, for Olivia "is very lonely ... for the room is dark and she cannot read—& most of the time Mrs. Smith [the nursemaid] is out in the kitchen with the baby" (4:242). To his sister-in-law, Susan Crane, Clemens includes two illustrations variously entitled "Two views of Langdon Clemens *Thinking*" or "Two Views of Langdon Clemens asleep." He also includes careful measurements of his small son: 16 inches long; 6-1/2 round at the hips; 8 inches at the waist; 9-1/2 inches at the abdomen (over thick bandage); and 10 inches around the bust. Clemens notes that Langdon's wrist at thirteen days is 2 inches, his "ankle" 2-1/4, and the length of his foot is 2-1/4 (4:243-44). His dimensions indicate a small infant.

Months pass. Olivia, following the death of her girlhood friend, Emma Nye, from typhoid, in their Buffalo home, also contracts typhoid. Langdon endures various illnesses. Clemens returns to the lecture circuit in order to meet his financial obligations, and the new mother misses her husband. Clemens' letters home during this four-month period speak of Langdon with a variety of emotions. To brother-in-law Charley, Clemens affects slang on the part of Langdon and then scolds the child: "My son, slang is a thing I will *not* permit in this house." Following a humorous and colloquial response by the child to his father's rebuke, Clemens blames his sister-in-law, Susan Crane, for the boy's "unhappy disposition proclivity for slang" (4:244). In December, after a period of sickness, Clemens reports to Joseph Twichell that he is "a bachelor up stairs & don't have to jump up & get the soothing syrup—though I would as soon do it as not, I assure you." His self-reported eagerness to assist exists, in part, because "Livy will be almost certain to read this letter" (4:275). The following comment accompanies a Christmas photograph sent to great-grandma Eunice Ford: "This present is a small personal friend of mine who has gotten over his crimson period, his yaller period & his red-gum period & has bleached out & taken a good complexion" (4:285). Additional scattered references to Langdon occur throughout the following weeks and months. Notably, in early January, Clemens refers to his son as "cubbie"—an affectionate nickname that Olivia will also embrace, possibly originating from Clemens' steamboat days (4:301).

Four months following Langdon's birth, Clemens, frustrated by his inability to make significant progress on a promised manuscript, writes his publisher Elisha Bliss "out of this chaos of my household" to explain a change in the family's plans:

correct spelling of mattress?

We are packing up, to-night, & tomorrow I shall take my wife to Elmira on a matrass, ~~with~~—for she can neither sit up nor stand—& will not for a week or two. It is a great risk, but the doctor agrees that the risk is just as great to have her stay here & worry herself to death with two ~~ju~~ child-nurses whom she cannot look after, & who neglect the sick child. In three whole months I have hardly written a page of MS. You do not know what it is to be in a state of absolute frenzy—desperation. I had rather die twice over than repeat the last six months of my life. (4:365)

FLAG

This "chaos of my household" precipitates the Clemens' move from Buffalo and a several-month stop in Elmira, New York, en route to their Hartford, Connecticut home. At his sister-in-law's hilltop farmhouse setting in Elmira, Clemens isolates himself from his wife and son—who remain in the city a few miles below with his mother-in-law—and makes substantial progress on his promised manuscript.

Letters by Olivia also shed light on the experiences of parenting. Olivia's first mention of her son occurs a full year after his birth. The absence of available letters may tacitly acknowledge the adjustments, sicknesses, and family movements during that time. In a letter to her husband, Olivia reports, "As soon as I had the baby washed and dressed this forenoon I went up in the guest room and lay down and slept until two o'clock." In wifely tones that suggest appreciation mingled with instruction and matters of everyday life, Olivia continues:

The baby is so sweet and dear, I know as he grows older you and he will love each other like *every thing* What a wonderful thing love is, I do trust that we shall be a *thoroughly united loving family*—it certainly is the heaven here below. ...

Cubbie is very anxious to have you get home Sat. he hopes that you will not fail us on any account. ... I have not been out today, I have slept and visited with the baby most of the day.⁵

Interspersed with comments about Langdon, Olivia mentions bills, checks, anxieties about Samuel's lecture schedule, and visits with neighbors. She promises to send "pictures of the baby and myself as soon as we have any taken" later in the month. Her letter traverses a range of new mother experience.

On her twentieth-sixth birthday, Olivia addresses Samuel as "My Dear Heart" at the "last end of the day when the life and energy are rather gone out of me" to write reflectively that "I never think about feeling badly that I am growing older—I hope that age will make me more worthy the respect of my husband and children—I do long (you would not allow me to say aspire I suppose) to be worthy of them, to be worthy of such a dear sweet baby as mine is, I hope that as he grows older I shall be thoroughly in sympathy with him in all ways." Olivia offers her perception of Langdon as a timid baby, "painfully afraid" of Patrick [McAleer, the coachman] and adds, aware that she is now pregnant with their second child, "Oh Youth he is such a delight to me I am so thankful for him—If anything happens to me you must love him *aw-ty awfully*." Near the end of the letter, Olivia notes that "Mother sends love and I know the Cubbie wants to, but poor little fellow he cannot speak yet—though he certainly has a speaking face."⁶ Langdon is almost thirteen months old at this time. The next day, "The baby has not felt quite usually well today has a little cold—and his gums hurt him."⁷ Olivia combines anxiety over death—statistically relevant for pregnant women in her century—with concern for the development of their son.

Her letter of December 2, 1871, turns towards homebuilding. Already almost five months pregnant with their second child, Olivia has been "drawing a plan of our house." With regard to her health and that of her unborn child, she tells Samuel that she intends to be "as careful as I know how during these coming months—I hope not to have as delicate a child next time as little Langdon was." Anticipating their second child, Olivia justifies her plans for their Hartford home and the "necessary ... 29000. ... I think I have about decided what we shall do about building, I have decided so you will not have to decide you see, ~~de~~ Dear Heart." After the house is built, and if they discover after several years that they

are living beyond their means, “we will entirely change our mode of living. ... The children will be older and I shall not need so much help in the care of them. ... We need now the comfort of a convenient home,



Mark Twain's Son, Langdon Clemens. Portrait in Bronze by Augusta Graves. Reproduced with permission of the Arnot Art Museum.

while our babies are young and needing care.” Olivia concludes, “Good night Darling —I do love our boy better and better every day if that is possible.”⁸ Olivia’s original cost estimate for construction of their Farmington Avenue home will in actuality grow to more than \$40,000.

As their second Christmas with Langdon approaches, Samuel again travels the lecture circuit. On December 20, Olivia notes Langdon’s improvement in health and hopes he is “over the worst now.” She adds, “When we say where is papa he looks right at your picture that stands on the bureau.” Olivia laments “more than a month of separation, before we can even look at each other.”⁹ At Christmas, Langdon is sick enough to merit Clemens’ return home, but a telegram from Olivia warns him off.¹⁰ Olivia reports that a homemade Christmas gift from cousin Sammy Moffett is well-received. Langdon “was wonderfully pleased with the rattle, would set the ball in it rolling then try to stop it with his finger.”¹¹ As the New Year looms, Olivia anticipates the birth of their second child and confides her concern over possible ensuing trials related to her delivery: “oh I do *love* the child so tenderly, if anything happens to me in the Spring you must never let him go away from you, keep him always with you, read and study and play with him, and I believe we should be reunited in the other world.” Olivia notes her sister, Susan Crane, is “thoroughly in love with the baby, thinks him the sweetest baby she ever saw.” Near the end of her missive, she adds, with emphasis and perhaps with relief, “Cubbie *Splendid*.”¹²

A week later, Olivia informs her absent husband, “The baby is well and as sweet as can be only not as devoted to his Mother as she would like to have him—You will see a change in the little fellow.”¹³ A few days later, Olivia notes that Langdon “has his second tooth, he has twice today said something very like Papa—I talk papa at him a good deal of time.” Two months preceding the birth of their second child, Olivia comments, “I have ever so much to write you, but I am feeling just a little light headed tonight, so think I must go to bed.”¹⁴ Soon enough she will be a mother of two.

Olivia’s letters pause. Between January 1872 and her next communication on July 7 occur the birth of their second child, a daughter; their travels to Elmira for the baby’s baptism; their return to Hartford; and Langdon’s death. In a chapter entitled “Embracing Domesticity: *The Adventures Tom Sawyer*” drawn from an unpublished manuscript, Michael Kiskis summarizes the events that transpired during those six months of Olivia’s silence. Through the first half of 1872, Kiskis notes:

Clemens makes multiple references to Langdon's health and hardiness; however, there are also hints of delayed development. On February 13, 1872, Clemens reports to Mary Mason Fairbanks that Langdon has not yet begun to walk (he is 16 months old). Clemens passes this off humorously, "that is not backwardness of development physically, but precocity of development intellectually ... since it is development of inherited indolence, acquired from his father" (5:44). On April 22, Clemens mentions to Charles and Susan Warner that both Langdon and Susy are thriving, though "Langdon has no appetite, [he] is brisk & strong. His teeth don't come—& neither does his language" (5:79). In May, Susy is still strong, though Langdon is weak after a bout of teething and a developing cough. That cough was a harbinger of crisis, and after the Clemens were back in Hartford (they spent some time in Elmira where Suzy was baptized on May 26, 1872), Langdon's illness was diagnosed as diphtheria.

Any one of these events might cause a young mother to find the task of letter writing tiring. Olivia's silence seems appropriate.

Letters written by Hartford neighbor Lilly Warner to her husband, lawyer and author Charles Dudley Warner, reveal aspects of Langdon's death. She recounts, "The little Clemens boy has at last finished his weary little life. For two or three days his cold grew worse, till at last, Sat-dy, it was pronounced to be diptheria, & at 9 o'cl. yesterday morning he gave up his life-long struggle to live & died quietly in his mother's arms." Mrs. Warner notes, "his poor devoted mother is almost heart-broken" and his father "was all tenderness but full of rejoicing for the baby—said he kept thinking it wasn't death for him but the beginning of life." Another source, thirteen-year-old Susy Clemens' 1885 biography of her father, offers her understanding of the circumstances surrounding her brother's death and departure for burial without his mother or father. Susy notes, "mamma became very very ill, so ill that there seemed

a great danger of death, but with a great deal of good care she recovered” (5:97-99).

Samuel Clemens responds to his daughter’s account of Langdon’s death in his autobiographical dictation of 1906. He reveals that a long excursion with his young son during a “raw, cold morning” brought on the cold that led to Langdon’s death. Lost in his “reverie,” Clemens allowed the “furs to fall away” from Langdon, almost freezing the child. Clemens comments, “I was the cause of the child’s illness. ... I have always felt shame for that treacherous morning’s work. ... I doubt if I had the courage to make confession at that time. I think it most likely that I have never confessed until now” (5:99). In his *My Mark Twain*, W. D. Howells offers the following comment:

There had been a boy, and “Yes, I killed him,” Clemens once said, with the unsparing self-blame in which he would wreak an unavailing regret. He meant that he had taken the child out imprudently, and the child had taken the cold which he died of, but it was by no means certain this was through its father’s imprudence. I never heard him speak of his son except that once, but no doubt in his deep heart his loss was irreparably present.¹⁵

In a 1911 letter to Albert Bigelow Paine, Olivia’s older sister, Susan Crane, shared journal entries from the period of Langdon’s death. On Wednesday, June 5, Susan noted, “We arrived in the sunlight [in Elmira], and with dear friends laid the pure beautiful sleeper near his grandfather just as the sun was going down” (5:99-100). These various accounts—by neighbor and friend and sister and father and aunt—each offer vivid images connected with Langdon’s passing and burial in Elmira.

Olivia returns to the task of letter writing a month after Langdon’s death. Writing from Fenwick Hall in New Saybrook, Connecticut, where the Clemens are summering with Susy, Olivia acknowledges the family is “comfortably fixed here . . . The air is delightful, the coolness is a pleasant coolness not chilliness.” She also notes, “the only disagreeableness is that there are so many Hartford people here, but then I stay closely in the room.” After a discussion of household items and dresses, Olivia explains her reclusive inclination: “Seeing the Mothers with their

children does make me so homesick for Langdon—it seems as if I could not do without him—Mollie don't let that green box in the study be touched it has the cast of Langdon's face in it.”¹⁶ The death mask made of Langdon, formed to have a bust sculpted following his death, now resides in the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum in Hannibal, Missouri. The plaster bust of Langdon executed by Buffalo sculptor Augusta C. Graves is held at the Arnot Art Museum in Elmira, New York.

Two months after Langdon's death, still summering at the shore, Olivia writes Susan Crane to express her gratitude for their now four-month-old “little Susie” who “does grow in grace and sweetness every day. ... I do not know what I would do without her she is such a comfort to me—I think that her eyes may grow like Langdon's, they are lighter now than they were when we left home.” Even as she takes comfort in her second child, Olivia grieves for the loss of her firstborn:

Night before last I felt as if I must go and fix
Langdon's grave, as if it was all I could do and
I longed to do that—He was so rarely beautiful,
this house is full of children but there is none
like him—I cannot help a bitter pang when I
think how the child would reach to go from
me—I think I was very weak to permit it.

A week passes. Olivia returns to her unsent letter and reveals self-deprecation coupled with a need to return to Elmira to visit the as yet, unseen grave of her son: “sometimes it has seemed as if I must go home [to Elmira] before I am settled for the Winter, I want to go to my Langdon's grave, oh I do so long for the little fellow, yet I do feel so entirely unworthy of him, as if I was not fit to be the Mother of such a child.” Olivia asks:

Sue tell me about his little grave, I suppose
what we want is two little stones one for the
head and one for the foot—oh how I loved him
yet how he always kept me at a distance—That
frightful cold! I wonder if he could have staid
with us if it had not been for that—My little
baby is such a comfort to me—Sue do not think
of me as always sad, I am not so I have great

comfort in those are left to me, only I feel so often as if my path way was to be from this time forth lined with graves—Sometimes I am thankful that he is gone—and Sue I know that I get along with it easier than most mothers could, sometimes I think I do not feel as intensely as most Mothers do. ... It seems sometimes as if I cried more it would be a relief.¹⁷

Like Samuel, Olivia struggled with guilt at the passing of Langdon. Their words offer poignant insight into their emotions as new and then grieving parents.

Notes

FLAG 1. *Mark Twain's Own Autobiography*, ed. Michael J. Kiskis, 2nd ed. (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 2010), pp. **xlvi**–**iv**.

2. Michael Haines, "Fertility and Mortality in the United States" <<http://eh.net/encyclopedia/article/haines.demography>>

3. *Mark Twain's Letters, vol. 4: 1870-1871*, ed. Victor Fischer and Michael B. Frank (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1995), p. 225. Subsequent citations to *Mark Twain's Letters* indicated parenthetically.

4. Ron Powers, *Mark Twain: A Life* (New York: Free Press, 2005), p. 8.

5. 20 November 1871; CU-MARK, #00679.

6. 28 November 1871; CU-MARK, #00681.

7. 29 November 1871; CU-MARK, #00682.

8. 2 December 1871; CU-MARK, #00683.

9. 20 December 1871; CU-MARK, #00691.

10. 29 December 1871; CU-MARK, #00698.

11. 27 December 1871; CU-MARK, #00520.

12. 30 and 31 December 1871; CU-MARK, #00699.

13. 7 January 1872; CU-MARK, #00709.

14. 9 January 1872; CU-MARK, #00713.

15. Howells, *My Mark Twain* (1910; rpt. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1967), p. 12.

16. 7 July 1872; CU-MARK, #00763.

17. 27? July and 4 August 1872; CU-MARK, #12778.

Index

A

- Adventures with a Donkey*, 44
Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, 2, 9, 11, 37, 139, 160, 193-194, 224, 238, 264, 281, 294
Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The, 2, 7-8, 160, 224, 238
Albro, Walter H., 79
Allahabad 13, 55, 104
Alpert, Mrs. Joseph (See *Lena Maltz*), 175, 176
Alta California, 3, 163
American Vandal Abroad, The, 64, 192
Anderson, Douglas, 32
Anderson, Ernfred, 157, 164-165
Andrews, Edwin W., 79
Antenne Collection, 275
 Katherine Leary, 275
 Katherine Leary Antenne, 275
Arnot, John Jr., 79
Arnot, Mathias H., 79
Atkinson, Frank H., 79
Atlantic Monthly, 9, 11, 275-276, 278
Atwater, Dwight, 79
Auntie Cord (See *Cord, Mary Ann*), 8-9, 55-56, 88, 262, 275-276, 278-279, 280, 283, 287

B

- Baldwin, J. Davis, 79
Barber, W. Charles, 345
Baetzhold, Howard, 267, 328
Barney, Joseph H., 79
Beard, Daniel Carter, 12
Beecher, Henry Ward, 107, 125, 250, 310, 314
Beecher, Julia (Mrs. Thomas K.) 35, 84, 107-108, 119, 310-312, 353
 bobbed her hair, 131, 311
 contract stones, 108, 209-210
 Olivia's gospel, 133
 Olivia's Sunday school teacher, 131
Beecher, Lyman, 107, 126-127, 138, 310

- Beecher, Thomas Kennicot, 1, 7, 17, 20-21, 24, 27, 48, 70, 74-75, 87, 107-108, 111, 113-117, 121-129, 134, 138, 151, 160, 188, 192, 195, 209, 221, 223, 250, 254, 263, 268, 306-308, 310, 324, 327, 329, 350, 353, 355
 begins ministry in 1854, 107, 125, 308, 310
 brotherhood of man, 107
 Elmira Opera House, 123
 friendship with Jervis Langdon, 25, 107, 307-313
 Gleason's Water Cure, 108
 institutional church, 130
 Julia Jones Beecher, 310,
 man-of-all-work, 127
 man of science, 129
 Ministerial Union, 109-113, 128
 Mr. Beecher and the clergy, 108
 names Quarry Farm, 22
 and Olivia Langdon, 24, 107, 109, 118, 124, 134, 140, 221, 349, 353
 preached no doctrine, 107, 127
 S'CAT (Samuel Clemens), 108-109, 113, 192
 Susan Langdon Crane, 127
Beers, Maxwell, 28
Bell, Alexander Graham, 92-93
Bement, Edward P., 79
Blaine, James G., 18
Bliss, Elisha Jr., 5, 237, 256, 358, 361
Booth, Dr. Arthur W., 31, 231
Brand, John, 79
Brick Church, 60, 150, 224
Brockway, Zebulon R., 1, 61, 72, 84, 88
Brooks, Frank, 28
Brooks, Van Wyck, 121-122, 127, 132, 137, 139, 311
 Olivia Langdon, 121-122, 132, 137
 stagnant fresh-water aristocracy (Elmira), 124
Brown, Charles W., 79
Brown, Dr. John, 8-9, 256, 258, 260
Buffalo, NY, ix, 6, 35, 94, 119, 140, 163, 193, 200, 221, 229, 265, 301, 304, 317, 349, 351-352, 355-358, 360-361, 367

Buffalo Express, 6, 18, 306, 313, 317, 345,
349, 352

Bundy, Jabin A., 79

Burr, Esther Hudson, 162

Bush, E. Marshall, 32, 34

Bush, James John, 78, 80

Byrne, Thomas E., xi, 173, 175, 229

C

Cable, George Washington, 12, 68-69, 195

Cats at Quarry Farm, 292-300

Belshazzar, 298-299

favorite cat (MT's), 296

and fireworks at Quarry Farm, 298

names of cats at Quarry Farm, 293

Sour Mash, 266, 293, 296-300

Theodore Crane and Sour Mash, 326

Chemung Canal, 1, 20, 272, 305-306

Chemung Canal Trust Company, 27, 31,
278

Chemung County, 1, 27, 81-82, 164, 190,
305

Chemung County Historical Society, ix-x,
xiii, 32, 156, 171, 188, 189, 278, 302

Christian, Dr. Frank, 32

City Club, 87

Clarke, Harry M., 189

Clemens, Clara L., xiii

and Aunt Susan, 333

and Do as you Please Hall, 327

and Louise Florence Condol, 280

and Ossip Gabrilowitsch, 165-171

at burial of SLC, 154

at Langdon Mansion, 136

Mark Twain/Ossip Gabrilowitsch
monument in Woodlawn Cemetery,
157, 165

married in 1909

My Father, Mark Twain (QF excerpts)
39-45

photo as child with cousins, 26

resting place in Woodlawn Cemetery,
160

Clemens, "Jean," Jane Lampton, 194

and cows at Quarry Farm, 259

funeral, 343

Jean Clemens' Humane Society, 120

and letter from Susan Crane, 332

Park Place School, 174

photo as child with cousins, 26

stays behind at Quarry Farm in 1895, 14

theatrics at Quarry Farm, 52

Clemens, Langdon

and colic, 359

Cubbie (nickname), 360, 362, 364

death from diptheria, 143, 365

early birth, 358

death, 238, 356, 357, 364-368

James Redpath, 359

Jesse Haney, 359

Lilly Warner's account of death, 365-66

SLC's self-blame for his son's death
366

and Susan Crane, 357, 360

use of slang, 360

Clemens, Olivia Langdon, ix,
assessment of (SLC), 145-147

birth of Olivia Susan, 7

cemetery marker at Woodlawn, 159-160

Charles Dickens, 237

courtship, 4, 23-24, 46-47, 49

embalmed versus cremation of, 145

and Emma Nye, 352-356

engagement, 264

fall on icy pavement, 17

and father, 122

funeral, 144-145, 223

gospel of self-reliant revolt, 133

high-strung, nervous nature, 42

image on Quaker City, 46, 199, 221,
237

and invalidism, 3

influence upon his literary style (SLC),
135-136, 138-142

Katy Leary account of meeting Mrs.

Clemens, 89-91

and Langdon, 356-368

loved humor, 140

marriage, 4, 18, 350-351

and mother-in-law, 22

and parents, 263

refining nature, 137

reviewing SLC's proofs, 5, 11, 192

and S'cat, 109

and siblings, 23

and Susan Crane, 49 120, 263

and Sunday School class, 353

and Sunday School teacher, 131-133

- Theodore Crane endorses marriage to SLC, 315
- Thomas K. Beecher, 24, 73, 107, 123-124, 127, 129, 134
- and Van Wyck Brooks, 122
- wedding, 221
- Clemens, "Susy," Olivia Susan
- baby, 365
 - birth location, 50
 - and cats, 295-297
 - death of, 15, 63, 143, 148, 159, 170
 - Ellerslie, 91
 - and fireworks at Quarry Farm, 294
 - and Katy Leary, 88, 91, 270
 - letter to Aunt Susan from Bryn Mawr, 334-335
 - and *Prince and the Pauper, The*, 10, 207
 - at Quarry Farm, 40, 91, 244
 - remained at Quarry Farm (1895), 14, 63, 289, 336-337
 - and Rudyard Kipling, 102
- Clemens, Pamela, 11
- Clemens, Samuel Langhorne
- billiards, x, 54, 84, 88, 107, 128, 175, 187, 209, 223, 312, 325
 - Brick Church, 60, 150, 224
 - Cannon Ball, 137, 199
 - card games, 54, 209
 - cat man, 292
 - and Charley Langdon, 23
 - contract stones, 108, 195, 209
 - courtship, 23-24, 46-47
 - death, 148-155
 - dusting papa off, 141
 - Elmira influence, ix-x
 - funeral, 18, 60, 148-155, 174, 224, 281, 341
 - German language, 62, 164, 168, 201-204, 207, 218-219, 283, 289-291
 - Holy Samuel, 40, 201, 333, 342
 - Jubilee Singers, 208
 - Kipling's visit in Elmira, 104
 - Quaker City* cruise, 45-46
 - last long visit at Quarry Farm, 60
 - last resting place, 154
 - letter to Rudyard Kipling, 106
 - little Jewish girl, 175
 - man's man, 47
 - married in 1870, 6, 48
 - married state is obedience, 141
 - Olivia's influence upon him, 135-139, 142
 - Opera House, 64-68
 - and Rudyard Kipling, 106
 - shocking the bourgeois, 134
 - Susan Langdon Crane, 49-50
 - the Study, 50
 - swearing, 139, 200, 298
 - Tannhauser March, 135
 - tossing apples at trains, 178-182
 - Twain hoax, 189
 - wedding, 18, 221
- Clute, L. D., 31
- Condol, Louise Florence, 280
- Condol, William, 280
- Condol, Leon W., 280
- Conklin, Melvin M., 79-80
- Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, A, 2, 12, 195, 224, 238, 264, 267-168, 286, 297, 302, 328-329, 352
- Connelly, John M., 72
- Connelly, Margaret, 272-273
- Contract on Stones, 108, 195, 209-210
- Cord, Mary Ann, 275-281
- accident at Quarry Farm, 280
 - Atlantic Monthly*, 275-76, 278
 - Aunt Rachel, 275-277
 - Blue Hen's Chickens, 276
 - born in Maryland, 277
 - cook, 8, 55-56, 276, 278, 283
 - Elmira Daily Advertiser*, 279
 - funeral, 279
 - Henry, 276-281
- Cord, Primus, 278
- Cornell, Alonzo B., 66
- Cornell Law School, 18
- Cornell University, 17-18, 25, 27, 235
- Cornwell, Albert G., 31, 33, 170
- Cowen, Thaddeus C., 78, 80
- Coykendall, Jacob B., 189, 223
- Crane, Hiram, 263-264, 305-306, 313
- Crane, Theodore W., 2, 4, 6, 21, 56, 80, 84, 161-162, 195, 203, 221, 262-270, 276, 279, 286, 301-331
- Andrus and Langdon Lumbering Firm, 313, 318
 - appreciated good literature, 264

- and *Connecticut Yankee*, A, 302, 328-330
- Crane Lumber Yard, 313
- dairy, 35
- death, 13, 267-269, 329-330
- depression, 328-329
- Dixon Wecter, 316-318
- Education, 309
- funeral, 269
- games with SLC, 41
- parents, 302-303, 305
- Quarry Farm acquisition, 17, 49
- companion readings in portable-hammock, 8
- positive irritant to Mark Twain, 263
- and runaway carriage, 56-58
- stroke, 328-329
- Crane, Mrs. Theodore (Susan Langdon)
- adoption, 303-305
- American Association of Medical Milk, 338-339, 346
- dairy at Quarry Farm, 35, 258, 302, 339
- Dixon Wecter, 262, 269, 316, 318-319, 330-331
- Do as you Please Hall, 40, 327
- family background, 303
- Go as you Please Hall, 261, 327
- The Lady Beloved, 331, 342
- Last Will and Testament, 303
- Our Lady of the Flowers, 40, 41-42, 254, 290, 314
- Saint Sue/Saint Susan, 40, 49, 333
- Thomas K. Beecher, vii, 1, 7, 17, 20, 21, 24, 27, 48, 70, 74, 75, 87, 107-108, 111, 114, 119, 120, 123, 129, 134, 138, 151, 160, 188, 192, 195, 209, 221, 223, 250, 254, 263, 268, 306-308, 310, 324, 327, 329, 350, 353, 355
- D**
- Dana, E. W., 33
- Darby, Francis, 173-174
- Darby, Dr. Frank, 173-174
- Davidson, John T., 79-80
- Day, Olivia, 108, 310
- Dent, Alfred B., 79-80
- Detroit, Michigan, 354
- DeVoto, Bernard, 132, 139, 295-296, 300, 316
- DeWitt, J. T., 79, 80
- DeWitt, Sutherland, 79, 80
- Dexter, Seymour, 78, 80
- Dickens, Charles, 23, 47, 213, 237, 264, 315, 328
- Dickinson, George H., 80
- Dickinson, George S., 80
- Diven, Alexander, 32, 66, 279, 313
- D.L. and W. trains, 35
- Dog's Tale*, A, 15, 196, 224
- Downing, Andrew Jackson, 235, 239, 241, 247
- Drake, Henry E., 78, 80, 371
- Dumars, Robert R., 78, 80
- Duncan, Charles C., 190, 314
- Duneka, Frederick A., 149-150, 155
- E**
- Eastlake, Charles Locke, 244, 257
- Eastman, Annis Ford, 119, 311
- Eastman, Crystal, 119
- Eastman, Max, xiii, 60, 71, 119, 311
- Rev. Eastman's prayer, 152
- Eastman, Rev. Samuel, xi, 119
- Eastman, Mrs. Yvette, xiii, 120
- Ellerslie, 91, 246, 251-253, 260, 296, 325
- Elliott, Daisy L., xi
- Ellis, Clarence, 28, 32
- Elmira, N.Y., ix, xi, 40, 42, 46, 75, 120, 148, 228, 235, 293, 301, 349, 361, 367
- Elmira Academy of Science, 108, 129
- Elmira College, x-xii, 7, 17-19, 20, 36-37, 45, 85, 108, 129, 161-2, 171, 222-3, 228, 231, 234-6, 239, 242, 246, 255, 291, 302, 333, 339
- Elmira Female College, 1, 309, 337, 353
- founding of, 309
- preparatory department, 309, 353
- Elmira Opera House, 66, 69, 123
- Elmira Reformatory, 1, 61-63, 84, 195,
- Elmira Water Cure, x, 1, 35, 53,
- Emerson, Joseph J., 80
- English History Game (SLC), 38, 194
- Erie, 1-2, 229-230
- Express, The* (of Buffalo), 6, 18, 306, 313, 349, 352, 355

F

- Falck, A.D., 31
Fairbanks, Mary Mason, 265, 316-317,
319, 323, 325, 349-350, 358, 365,
the wedding of Mark Twain, 350
Farrar, Charles S., 129, 371
Fassett, J. Sloat, 71
Fassett, Mrs. J. Sloat, 81
Faustnaught, John Henry, 238, 320, 327
Ferguson, William H., 78, 80
Fitch, Arthur S., 78, 80, 188
Ford, Eunice (Mrs. Andrew Langdon),
162, 359-360
Ford, Professor Darius, 23
Freed, Mrs. Louise, 176-178
French, Erwin D., 34
Frost, William H., 78, 80
Fuller, Robert R., 79, 82

G

- Gabrilowitsch, Nina, 161, 167, 171
Gabrilowitsch, Ossip, 18, 147-150, 154-
155, 157, 160, 161, 165-166, 169, 171,
271
Detroit Symphony, 168, 170
Gabrilowitsch, Mrs. Ossip. (See *Clemens,
Clara*)
Gee, Russell F. Sr., 28
Gerity, Clayton R., 79, 80
Gerity, William S., 79, 80
Gilbert, Henry K., 78, 80
Gilded Age, The, 7-8
Gilder, Richard Watson, 139
Gillespie, George, 28
Gilson, Jack, 175
Gleason, Dr. Rachel Brooks, x, 1, 35, 53,
84, 108, 311, 322
Gleason, Dr. Silas O., x, 1, 35, 84, 108
Grant, Ulysses S., General, 11-12, 18, 24,
66-67, 205
Gregg, General William, 66
Gridley, G. A., 78, 80
Guinea Hen Story, 89, 92

H

- Hall, Francis G., 54, 74, 78, 80
Hamilton, Andrew B., 79, 80
Hannibal, Mo., ix, 11, 101, 293, 316, 367
Harding, Charles L., 78, 80

- Hart, William E., 78, 80
Hartford, Conn., ix, xi, 5, 7-8, 10-13, 15,
50, 62, 65-67, 74, 88-90, 93-94, 101-102,
104, 143, 151, 155, 193, 197, 201, 207,
211, 221, 224, 228-230, 237-238, 244-
245, 250, 263, 267, 280, 283, 289, 293,
295, 302, 310, 321, 323-324, 328-329,
335, 337, 350, 354, 356-358, 361-362,
364-366
Hawaii, ix
Hawley, Gen. Joseph P., 54, 65-67, 74, 76,
194
Hazard, Charles, 78, 80
Heller, Mary T., xi
Heller, Robert, 85
Henstridge, Rev. Frederick, 87
Hibben, Paxton, 126
Hills, Fred D., 79, 82
Hooker, Isabella Beecher, 310, 346
Hope-Jones Organ Co., 108
Hope-Jones, Robert, 70, 108
Hotchkiss, Thomas, 78, 80
Howells, William Dean, 9, 37, 56, 139,
167, 237, 256, 282, 329
Howes, Lorenzo, 80
Huck Finn Motel, x
Humphrey, Lucius A., 78, 80
Hungerford, Daniel D., 34

I

- Innocents Abroad, The*, 3, 5, 6, 24, 64, 74,
134, 135, 163, 182, 190, 192, 221, 237

J

- Jabberwocks, 131
Jackson, Louis G., 79-80
Johnson, Anna Laura, 70

K

- Kadichan, 44, 51
Adventures with a Donkey, 44
donkey, 44-45, 51, 55, 91, 266, 194,
297, 326
Kent, Horace M., 78, 81
Kipling, Rudyard
and autobiography, 99
Ben Koontz, 101-102
The Call, 103
and conscience (SLC), 100, 106

and copyright, 96-98
 East Hill, 95
 Elmira, 103-106
 and Hartford (SLC), 94, 101-102, 104
 Mark Twain's account, 103-105
 Tom Sawyer, 94, 98-99
 Klapproth, Charles
 birth and death, 87
 fireplaces, 86
 Klapproth's Saloon, 10, 84, 85-88, 175
 Mark Twain room, 84
 Gannett-Tripp Learning Center, 84
 Klebes, Ralph D., 28, 31-32
 Knox, Rev. Dr. William, 66
 Koppe, Gustave Ernst, 289
 Koppe, Ernest, 246, 262, 288-292
 Alden Hotel, 289
 Anna Vetter, 290-291
 automobiles, 291
 flowers, 289-290
 green house at QF, 290, 292
 Study, 290-291
 Susan Crane, 289-291

L

Lackawanna, 71, 144, 154-155, 163, 188, 229-230
 Lagonegro's, 87
 Langdon, Andrew, 17
 Langdon, Charles Jervis, 2, 3, 9, 13, 23, 24, 42, 162-164, 175, 319, 336
 active life, 24
 'Charley' meets Samuel Clemens (*Quaker City*), 3, 23, 46, 198, 313, 315, 350
 National Convention in Chicago, 24
 runaway carriage, 9, 282
 Langdon, Eleanor Sayles (Mrs. Jervis), 18, 25, 164, 288, 291
 Langdon Home, x, 4-7, 13, 19, 24, 27, 34-35, 42, 45, 48, 50, 54, 73, 103, 108, 148, 151, 155, 170, 174, 188, 192, 221-224, 349, 357
 Council of the City of Elmira, 29
 grandmother's birthday, 43, 52
 iron gates, 42-43
 Langdon Property Coupon, 30
 mahogany staircases, 43, 136

Main and Church Street, 4, 18, 20-21, 157, 160, 349, 353
 Mark Twain and Livy Langdon marriage, 349-352
 much loved home, 21, 323
 tax picture of Mansion, 31
 theatricals, 43, 52, 207
 Winner, George H., 27
 Langdon, Ida, 17, 19, 26, 45, 120, 162, 256, 302, 312, 319, 333
 Langdon, Ida Clark (Mrs. Charles), 163
 Langdon, Irene Fortner, 14, 231
 Langdon, Jervis (1809-1870), 3-4, 6, 17-19, 22-23, 47, 71, 143, 159, 162-163, 193, 237, 263-264, 303-304, 306, 353
 abolitionist, 21-24, 126-127, 307-308
 country boy and general disposition, 21, 122, 136
 death, 24, 48, 238, 265, 268, 307, 317, 352, 355
 and Elmira Female College, 308-309
 Enfield, New York, 20, 303
 Frederick Douglass, 22
 Ida the young & comely, 57
 lumbering in 1845, 20, 162, 238
 Mr. Steven's general store, 20
 and Quarry Farm, 35, 236, 245, 319-320
 relationship with Charles, 23, and Samuel Clemens, 315, 350
 stomach cancer, 317, 320, 352, 355
 Thomas K. Beecher, 25, 107, 128, 310
 Thomas K. Beecher memorial, 19-21, 70
 Vernon, Oneida County, birth, 20
 weekend house at Quarry Farm, 22, 222
 Langdon, Charles Jervis (1875-1952), 11, 14, 17-18, 137, 144, 147, 148-150, 154, 157, 164, 167, 169, 187, 197, 221, 228-230, 246, 290-91, 333, 335
 another stalwart Jervis, 25-27
 and Hope-Jones Organ, 71, 108
 and Langdon home, 27-28, 31
 Langdon, Jervis (1905-2004), 11, 18, 36, 230-234, 236, 246, 255, 291, 302

- Langdon, Olivia Lewis, 17, 22, 163, 200, 263, 303-304, 307, 312-313, 354, 356, 360
- Langdon Plaza, 20, 28, 31
- Lawton, Mary, 89, 105, 271, 275
- Leary, Katy, 84, 88-90, 105, 143-145, 147, 194, 225
- boarding house, 273-274
 - cat processions at QF, 91
 - comments on the visit of Rudyard Kipling, 105-106
 - Ellerslie, 91
 - Guinea Hen, 89, 92
 - Katy Leary Park, 275
 - and Mr. Bell (SLC), 92-93
 - Mrs. Clemens, 90-93
 - Quarry Farm, 89-93
 - Rice Lake Chronotype, 273-274
 - and telephone (SLC), 92-93
- Leary, Fenton, 271-272
- funeral, 272
- Leary, Margaret Connelly, 272
- Leary, Warren, 273-274
- Lectures, 46, 50, 61-73, 193
- "American Vandal Abroad, The," 64, 195
 - Cable, George Washington, 68, 195
 - Elmira Opera House, 66, 69, 123
- Elmira Reformatory, 1, 61-63, 84, 195
- General Hawley's Meeting, 65-68
 - Hope-Jones organ, 63, 108
 - Park Church (April 3rd, 1907), 63, 70-71, 96
- Leigh, Frederick P., 149-150, 155, 338, 359
- Lemunyan, Charles J., 79, 81
- Leschetizky, Theodor, 165-166
- Lewis, James, 11, 174
- Lewis, John T., viii, 55, 194, 262, 281-287, 290
- Brethren Church, 283, 284
 - Death, 287
 - dropsy, 287
 - Dunkard, 55, 279, 283, 284, 287
 - Henry H. Rogers, 10, 62, 209, 285, 286
 - heroism, 282, 283
 - high carriage, 56, 57,
 - Mary A. Stover, 286
 - Old Lewis, 55, 56
 - run away horse, 282
 - thirty dollar silver watch, 59
- Life on the Mississippi*, 11, 51, 99, 160, 189, 224, 238
- Longstreet, William H., 79, 81
- Loomis, Edward E., 63, 144, 155, 163, 174, 196, 274
- Loomis, Mrs. Edward (Julia Olivia Langdon), 25, 44, 63, 155, 163, 174, 196, 274, 287
- Lorch, Fred W., xiii, 63
- Lormore, William J., 79, 81
- Love Letters of Mark Twain, The*, 12, 270, 316, 317, 347, 373
- Lowman, Marshall, 84
- Lowman, Seymour, 34
- Love, William T.
- Mc**
- McAleer, Patrick, 88, 362
- McDowell, Robert M., 79, 81
- M**
- Maltz, Lena, 175, 176,
- Mann, Arthur, 28, 33
- Mark Twain's Days in Elmira*, 2
- Mark Twain Hotel, x, 19
- Mark Twain Riverfront Park, x,
- Mark Twain Society of Elmira, x
- Mark Twain Society Bulletin, xi, xii, xiii, 256, 258, 262, 270, 275, 281, 288, 292, 301, 347, 349, 352
- Maxwell, Isaac, 79, 82
- Metzger, Mary, xi, 174
- Millius, Henry E., 81
- Ministerial Association, 108, 109
- Monument to Adam, 54, 74, 75, 78, 194
- Miss Thurston's Seminary, 309
- Morse, J. T., 79
- Murder Trial, 189, 190
- Murphy, John, xi, 174
- Murray, J. Ralph, 84
- N**
- Neider, Charles, 13, 347
- New Haven Railroads, 229
- New York in Literature*, 2, 13, 264, 347
- Northrop, Louis, 87

Nye, Emma, viii, 265, 317, 320, 349, 352-355, 357, 360
 Detroit, 168, 169, 170, 171, 354-356
 Miss Thurston's Elmira Seminary, 353
 typhoid fever, 265, 317, 352, 355

O

Opera House. (*See Elmira Opera House*), 1, 20, 64-66, 69, 109-112, 114, 123, 128, 140
Ours Hose Company No., 374
Owens, Ron, 374

P

Paine, Albert Bigelow, 13, 47, 77, 106, 132, 155, 164, 166, 224, 245, 250, 256, 278, 282, 302, 316, 320, 347, 366
Palmer, Martin W., 78, 81
Park Church, 1, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19, 24, 27, 48, 60, 63
 bath-rooms, 116
 bell, 115
 free library, 115,
 Hope-Jones organ, 63, 70, 71, 108
 infirmary, 116, 117
 main building, 114
 printed circular, 117
 stalls for horses and carriages, 114
Park Place School, 143, 174, 289, 336
Pautz, A. W., 34
Peake, John Daulby, 70
Pecararo, Patrick, 32
Pennock, Mrs. Robert S., 291
Perry, Charles W., 31
Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, 14
Petrie, Mrs. Charles, 31
Phelps, Henry A., 31
Post, William T., 81
Pratt, Arthur, 78
Preswick, Christopher, 78, 81
Price, Uvedale, 235, 246, 256
Prince and the Page, The, 9
Prince and the Pauper, The, 2, 9, 10, 51, 160, 174, 193, 194, 207, 224, 238, 274, 295

Q

Quaker City, 3, 5, 23, 46, 64, 137, 146, 163, 190, 192, 198, 313, 315, 336, 349, 350, 358
Quarry Farm, vii, ix, x, xi, xiv, 2, 6-17, 22, 25, 35-41, 43, 45, 47-63, 84, 89, 91, 92, 103, 105, 108, 121, 127, 137, 143, 157, 160, 161, 164, 171, 173-176, 193-196, 208, 216, 221-223, 228-252, 254, 255, 257-268, 271, 276, 278, 280-284, 286-299, 301-303, 305, 309, 316, 319, 320, 322, 324, 326, 327, 329, 333, 336-340, 346
 "Aesthetic Movement", 244
 Andrew Jackson Downing, 235, 239, 247, 256, 257
 awestruck auditions, 51
 Calvert Vaux, 240, 244, 247
 Charles Locke Eastlake, 244
 children born at farm, 50
 Cornelius Roberts, 238
 dairy, 35, 258, 302, 339
 Ellerslie, 91, 246, 251, 252, 253, 260, 296, 325
 "ferme ornée", 235, 247, 248
 John Henry Faustnaught, 238, 320, 327
 National Register of Historic Places, 36, 246
 ornamental structures, 249
 pet animals, 44
 "Picturesque", viii, xiv, 228, 234-236, 240, 241, 243, 244, 246-249, 251, 253, 254-256, 260, 285, 346
 pocket-door, 244, 255
 "prospect towers", 259
 renovations, v, xiv, 231
 roller-blinds, 244, 245
 stone tower, 41
 stone watering troughs, 35, 150, 151, 152, 154, 184, 198, 199
 tent, 253, 254, 266, 326
 typical day, 51
 Uvedale Price, 235, 246, 256
 Villas and Cottages, 240, 257, 258
 veranda, 8, 95, 103, 236, 240-245, 248, 249, 254, 255, 257, 293, 297
 wooden roller-blinds, 244
Quintard, Dr. Edward, 148, 149

R

Rambling Club, 25
Ransom, Henry V., 78, 81
Rathbun Hotel, x, 175, 277
Redding, Conn. See Stormfield, 16, 89, 47
Reid, James R., 78, 81
Reynolds, George G., 281
Reynolds, Samuel T., 78, 81
Richardson, Jackson, 81
Richardson, Matt, 31-33, 82
Roberts, Cornelius, 238
Roberts, Donna, xi
Robinson, George M., 79, 81
Robinson, John M., 79, 81
Robinson, Lucius D., 66, 77, 79, 81
Rogers, Henry H., 10, 62, 209, 285
Rose, S. Edward, 178
Roughing It, 7, 51, 193, 224, 238, 294, 321, 352, 355
Rubenstein, Anton, 165, 169

S

Samossoud, Jacques, 160, 171
Samuel L. Clemens Performing Arts Center, x
San Francisco, Calif., 3, 102, 300
Sayles, Halsey, 25, 31, 164, 148
S'CAT, 108, 109, 113, 192
Sherwin, William F., 81
Sherwood, A. H., 79, 82
Shives, William E., 81
Sketches New and Old, 9, 277, 280, 283
Slee, John D., 21, 24, 79, 81, 303
Sly, James M., 78, 81
Smith, Dr. A. C., 31
Smith, Elijah B., 81
Smith, Roy, 72
Smith, Theodore G., 81
Smyrna, 3, 45, 46, 146
"Southern Tier," 238
Squires, Mrs. Martha Kelsey, 157
Stanchfield, John B., 71, 89, 209
Stanchfield, Mrs. John B., 89
Steele Memorial Library, xi, 156, 164, 178, 302
Sterling, Charles, 28
Stormfield, 16, 89, 147, 148, 149, 160, 164, 166, 167, 176, 223, 255, 273, 342
Stowe, Harriet Beecher, 107, 250, 310

Stowe, Lyman Beecher, 107, 125-127, 138, 310, 347
Stowell, William H., 81
Stover, Mary A., 286
Strachen, Emory, 175
Study, ix, x, xiv, 2, 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 36, 37, 39, 41, 50, 51, 52, 55, 84, 102, 139, 161, 164, 173-176, 193, 208, 222-224, 231, 234, 235, 246, 249-253, 255, 256, 259, 264, 290, 291, 293, 294, 298, 301, 323, 325, 326, 346, 367
Frederick Swan, 32
Ideal place to write, 37
Peter Pan house, 40
Reminiscent of a pilot-house, 161, 250
Susan Crane, 36, 249, 251, 293, 323
Snug little octagonal den, 36
the quiet zone, 52
unique little octagon, 50
Symonds, Alonzo D., 81

T

Taylor, Eva, xi, 107, 155, 165, 311, 375
Thomson, C. H., 78, 82
Tom Sawyer Motel, x
Towner, Ausburn, 78, 81, 162-164, 305, 347
Tramp Abroad, A, 10, 194, 224, 238
Tripp, Frank, 18, 185, 344
True Story, A, 8, 193, 275, 278
Turner, S. G. H., 31
Twain, Mark, vii-xiv, 1-4, 6-19, 23, 27, 32, 33, 35, 37-39, 45-56, 61-78, 80, 81, 84-89, 93-98, 100, 103, 105-109, 113, 119-122, 124, 127, 129, 131-145, 147, 148, 150-152, 154-167, 170, 171, 173-176, 178, 182, 183, 185-190, 192, 193, 195-199, 206, 208, 209, 210, 212, 220-224, 228-230, 234-237, 246, 249, 255-271, 273-290, 292-303, 305, 306, 310, 311, 313-325, 327-333, 337, 344-352, 355-357, 366-368,
Twichell, Joseph H., 224, 350, 375

U

UpDegraff, Edward L., xi, 375
UpDegraff, Dr. Thaddeus S., xi, 74, 81,
319, 375
Updyke, Lewis L., 79, 81, 375

V

VanDyke, Dr. Henry, 224, 376
Vaux Calvert, 240, 244, 247, 258, 344
Vickery, Albert J., 79, 81
Vieweg, Rev. Rudolf, 87

W

Wagner, Samuel H., 79, 81, 298, 376
Wales, Theron A., 74, 78, 81, 376
Ward, William A., 78, 81
Warner, Charles Dudley, 7, 15, 207, 337,
365
Warner, Edwin, 79, 82
Warner, George, 104
Washington, Henry, 278-281
Watering troughs, 35, 36, 375
Weaver, Erastus K., 78, 82
Webster & Company, 11, 12, 14
Webster, Charles L., 11, 12, 13
Wecter, Dixon, 12, 262, 263, 265, 269,
270, 316-319, 330, 331, 347, 371
Wilson, Otilie Erickson, xi, xiii, 2, 264
Wilson, Rufus R., xiii, 2, 25, 93, 264, 302,
307, 315, 347
Winner, George H., 27, 373
Wisbey, Herbert A. Jr., xi, xii, xiii, 165,
255, 257, 258, 270, 275, 281, 282, 288,
301, 346, 352
Wood, J. N., 33
Woodlawn Cemetery, viii, xi, x, 7, 87,
143-172, 193, 196, 224, 280, 287, 290,
291, 357
Wright, Peter, 78, 82
Wyckoff, Arcalous, 82
Wyckoff, C. Wesley, 82
Wyckoff, Ernest L., 82
Wyckoff, Frank T., 82
Wyckoff, George W., 82

Y

Yonge, Charlotte M., 9
Young, J., 82
Young, John, 82

Yunis, Nicky, 84

Yunis, Tuffly, 84

Z

Zimmerman, Eugene ("Zim") 82, 83
Zim's cartoon, 83