



Mark Twain Circular

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An Abolitionist's Dedication

Martin Zehr
Kansas City, MO

For every Mark Twain aficionado, scholar and amateur alike, the prospect of personal revelations regarding Twain and his writings are as exciting as they are expected, since he was a complex individual who was "...the embodiment of that most American of traits; the ability to invent and reinvent oneself."¹ That there is no dearth of opportunities to vicariously experience these personal recreations is a fact with which every Twain scholar is undoubtedly familiar. The central transformation of his life, the one which was a major focus for him as author and for us as readers and students, was the change in his attitude regarding racial issues. From his childhood in slaveholding Missouri to *Huckleberry Finn* is a long, important, and, surprisingly, sketchily documented personal journey.

A recent serendipitous discovery has become the impetus for exploring this transformation in greater detail. One year ago, I obtained an early-edition copy of *The Innocents Abroad* from Robert Slotta, proprietor of Admirable Books in Columbus, Ohio. My interest in this particular copy was based on the handwritten dedication on its flyleaf, which is as follows:

Presented to Richard D. Webb,

¹ Shelley Fisher Fishkin, *Lighting Out for the Territory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 127.

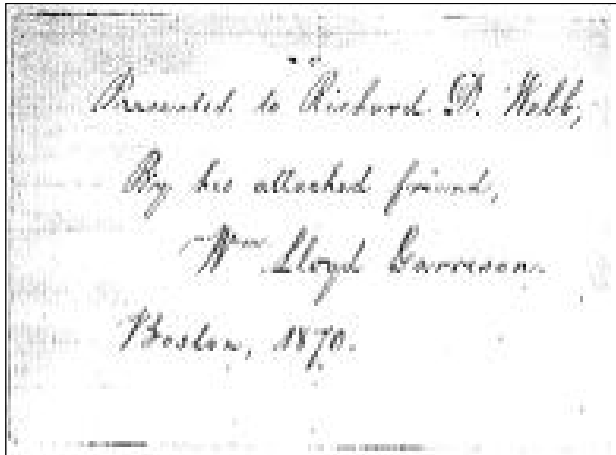
By his attached friend,
Wm. Lloyd Garrison.
Boston, 1870.

William Lloyd Garrison was the publisher of *The Liberator*, the primary printed forum for antislavery news and writings in the United States for more than three decades (1831-1865). For me, the dedication immediately raised questions regarding a possible Garrison-Twain connection, but the serendipitous part of this "discovery" came from the 1998 publication of *All On Fire*, a biography of Garrison by Henry Mayer which was nominated that year for a National Book Award. While "reading" a copy of this book at an airport newsstand, I came across references in the index to none other than Richard Webb, who, as it turns out, was a Dublin, Ireland abolitionist whom Garrison met during prewar antislavery meetings in Europe; according to Mayer, they became lifelong friends.

For Twain scholars, this finding raises a number of questions. At the date of the dedication, had Garrison and Twain crossed paths? Is the dedication in this book an indication that Twain's views on racial issues were known, and approved of, at this early stage of his career as author and celebrity? What evidence, in printed form or circumstantial, exists regarding Twain's views on racial issues prior to 1871? I have solicited Henry Mayer's

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views regarding these questions, and with respect to the first, his research does not indicate any meeting between the two or any direct communication. This conclusion is also supported by my own cursory review of Twain secondary sources, which thus far has not provided references to any meeting between Twain and Garrison. Of course, it is quite possible that Garrison was in the audience for one of Twain's Boston Lyceum lectures, organized by James Redpath, in 1869, a period during which Webb visited Garrison in the U. S., or that Garrison, who had been a visitor to the house of his fellow abolitionist Jervis Langdon in Elmira prior to Sam Clemens' arrival on the scene, was also familiar with Twain through this channel. Finally, as Henry Mayer has observed, it may well be the case that the dedication of this book reflects nothing more than Garrison's appreciation of Twain's wit and satire, part and parcel of his established celebrity status by 1870.

There are, of course, other well-known clues regarding Twain's transformation in the 1860s. His 1869 "Only A Nigger" column in the *Buffalo Express* and "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy," printed in *The Galaxy* (1870) are hardly subtle pieces of evidence regarding themes which would prominently figure in the remainder of his printed legacy. Twain was also quite familiar with the topical work of fellow lecturer-humorists like Petroleum Nasby; he wrote in a July 1869 issue of *Alta California* regarding Nasby's satiric antislavery diatribe "Cussed be Canaan" that "The lecture is a fair and logical argument against slavery, and is the pleasantest to listen to I have ever heard upon that novel and interesting subject." Nevertheless, clues regarding the changes in attitude and his conscious focus on racial issues which occurred during the 1860s are surprisingly scarce consider-

ing the literally hundreds of letters and newspaper articles which are still available from this formative period in his career.

I have written this piece with the intention of disclosing the existence of this "discovery" to Twain scholars who are more capable of divining its significance than I, but I would also like to solicit the assistance of fellow Twainiacs in answering my own questions; specifically, I would appreciate hearing from Twain scholars who have any information or other evidence bearing on the questions raised in this article.

I would like to thank the following individuals who generously gave invaluable assistance and advice during preparation of this article:

- * Shelley Fisher Fishkin, University of Texas, Austin.
- * Kevin MacDonnell, Proprietor, MacDonnell Rare Books, Austin, Texas.
- * Henry Mayer, Berkeley, California, author of *All On Fire*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1998.
- * Robert Slotta, Proprietor, Admirable Books, Columbus, Ohio.

Twain's Fugitive Friend in Florence

Robert D. Pepper
Palo Alto, CA

In 1892, when Mark Twain first lived in Florence, did he make friends with a man who was a notorious fugitive from American justice? The daughter of that man claimed that Twain was on good terms with her parents in that time and place. But she herself was too young to have any memory of Twain, and she does not claim that the famous author knew her father's true identity.

The daughter, an only child, was born in England in or about the year 1890. In an unpublished document headed "Theodora's Family History" (written no earlier than the 1920s and perhaps much later), she reveals that her father, whose real name was William Riley Foster, had assumed an alias— John Fermain Ward. His wife, nee Loula Belote, became Mrs. Louise Ward, and their daughter,

an only child, was Dorothy Ward in her childhood and adolescence. "Theodora" seems to have been a later invention.

According to Dorothy/Theodora, hers had been a very hard birth; and for several years thereafter her mother was an invalid. The family traveled from England to Switzerland to Italy, looking for a benign climate. "In Florence," wrote the daughter in later years,

"Mark Twain" called frequently on my parents, & is said to have taught me to walk. "You love little girls very dearly, Sam," said my father. "Yes & big ones just as well," answered Mr. Clemens smiling at mother. [Punctuation as in original]

The man Twain allegedly knew had been hunted by the police of two continents since 1888. Bachelor son of a wealthy merchant on the New York Produce Exchange, in the 80s William Foster himself was doing well as a businessman and living luxuriously. But at the end of September 1888 he was charged with having perpetrated a colossal fraud, by means of forged financial documents. "Forger Foster" read one headline— one of many in New York City dailies between September 29 and October 1.

In that short span of time, before Foster could be arrested and brought to trial, he slipped away and disappeared. Cooperating in his flight from justice was an attractive young woman, so much younger than Foster himself that she was thought to be his niece. All that was really known about her at the time was that she had been living with Foster and that she was called Lulu. Two headlines in Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World* read, "Foster and the Girl Lulu" and "Is Foster Lulu's Father?"

Lulu (that is, Loula Belote) was really Foster's mistress; but, as noted, a few years later she became his wife— if their English marriage was in fact legal. As Mr. and Mrs. Ward they stayed together, eluding a relentless police search, for a full nine years. Then in October 1897 Foster was caught in Paris; but it took another four months to get him extradited to New York. On February 15, 1898, page 14 of the *World* carried a story with five illustrations and the heading, "After Ten Years Exile William R. Foster Returns a Prisoner." But the wily Foster had not yet come to the end of his rope. On June 14 that same paper printed a follow-up (on page 5), with three illustrations and a heading that included a con-

spicuous typographical error: "Porger Foster is Once More a Fugitive from the Police." This time Foster disappeared permanently. As "Theodora" notes, he even separated from his wife and daughter, who never saw him again.

All this must have been very interesting indeed to Mark Twain— if, of course, he had actually been acquainted with the Foster-Wards in Florence. The accuracy of Theodora's story is anybody's guess.

Omnibus Note:—

For Twain's first sojourn in Florence, I have consulted Chapter 65 of *The Autobiography of Mark Twain*, ed. Charles Neider (New York: Harper and Row, 1959; rptd. 1990 by Harper-Collins as a Harper Perennial paperback).

"Theodora's Family History" consists of six numbered pages, handwritten in ink, totaling some 2500 words. At the bottom of the last page is written "To be continued"; but if there *was* a continuation, I have not seen it. As noted, the comments about Twain occur on page 5.

I obtained a copy of this document from Dr. Kevin O'Brien of St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia. He had found it in a Church of England retirement home where Dorothy/Theodora lived (as a lay person) toward the end of her life.

How Dr. O'Brien and I became interested in "Louise Ward" (Mrs. William R. Foster) and her daughter Dorothy is too long a story to tell here. Suffice it to say that we had a mutual interest in a wealthy American author/socialite who wrote (in England) under the name "Irene Osgood." Her maiden name was Nannie Irene Belote, and she was the sister of Loula Belote, who later called herself Louise Ward. For Irene Osgood and her first husband, Charles Cleveland Osgood, see *Who Was Who in America*, Vol. 1 (1897-1942).

Aside from "Theodora's Family History," the saga of William Foster must be pieced together from stories in New York daily newspapers of the 1880s and 90s. It can be most conveniently traced (*s.n.* "Foster") in the published index to the New York *Times* and the microfilmed index to the New York *Tribune* (1873-1906). But for the liveliest accounts, the curious researcher must go to competing journals published by the brothers Pulitzer: Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World* and Albert Pulitzer's New York *Morning Journal*.

For illustrations in the *World*, see Sept. 28, 1888 (p. 1); October 25, 1897 (p. 9); February 15,

1898 (p. 14); and June 14, 1898 (p. 5). On that last date, when Foster had just fled New York a second time, there was also an illustration in the *New York Herald* (p. 14). Albert Pulitzer's ultra-sensational *New York Morning Journal* could not match the *World* in illustrations, but Albert outdid his brother in the concoction of eye-catching headlines. See, e.g., these from 1888 (all on the front page): "Forger Foster" (Sept. 28); "Where Has Lulu Gone?" (Sept. 29); "Lulu is Found: Foster Isn't" (Oct. 1); and "Never Trust Him, Lulu" (Oct. 5).

Speaking of headlines, the two from the *New York World* cited in the text – both 1888 – can be found on Sept. 29 (p. 1) and Oct. 1 (p. 8).

The Strange Case of Tom Sawyer and the Disappearing Chapter Headings

Mark I. West
UNC, Charlotte

I have included Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* on my list of required readings for my children's literature course ever since I started teaching this subject in 1984. Because children's literature courses are in such a high demand at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, I frequently use a lecture format to accommodate as many students as possible. Unfortunately, with 150 students in the class, I cannot tell if they are keeping up with the readings without giving regular quizzes. For these reasons, I was recently thumbing through my old Bantam edition of *Tom Sawyer*, trying to come up with a few new reading questions. I came to chapter 24, which deals with the consequences of Tom's decision to identify Injun Joe as the actual murderer of the doctor, and I happened to notice the heading. It reads "Splendid Days and Fearsome Nights." This heading appealed to me, so I typed it out and then asked my students to explain its significance.

The next day, right after I finished distributing the quiz, a student raised her hand. "Dr. West," she said, "our copy of *Tom Sawyer* doesn't have chapter headings." I must have looked incredulous, for she dug out her copy from the depths of her backpack and handed it to me. It was, in fact, the 1994 Puffin Classics edition that I had asked the

bookstore to order. I looked through it, and, sure enough, there were no chapter headings. The chapters were just numbered. I therefore had no choice but to give all the students credit for the question.

That afternoon I wandered around the English Department, complaining to anybody who'd listen about Puffin's omission of Twain's chapter headings. One of my colleagues listened patiently to my rantings and then took down her Signet edition to see if it included chapter headings. After turning to chapter 24, she said, "Well, at least Signet kept the chapter headings." She then read it aloud: "Tom as the Village Hero — Days of Splendor and Nights of Horror — Pursuit of Injun Joe." Now I was really perplexed. Which edition, I asked myself, used the same chapter headings found in the original 1876 edition of *Tom Sawyer*? I set out to find answers.

Luckily for me, the library at UNC Charlotte has a good collection of rare books, including copies of the first American edition of *Tom Sawyer*, brought out by the American Publishing Company, and the first British edition, brought out by Chatto and Windus. I examined these rare books and discovered that the chapter headings in the first American edition corresponded exactly to the headings found in my colleague's Signet edition. When I looked through the British edition, however, I was surprised to learn that it had no chapter headings at all.

I then attempted to figure out why the chapter headings in the Bantam edition differed from the original headings. I ran through my mental Rolodex, trying to think of somebody who might be able to help me. The first person who came to mind was Henry Sweets, the long-time Director of Mark Twain's Boyhood Home and Museum in Hannibal, Missouri. I called Sweets, and he said that no one else had ever asked him about the chapter headings in *Tom Sawyer*. Although he could not answer all my questions without doing a lot of research, he provided me with some useful background information. According to Sweets, most of the editions of *Tom Sawyer* that came out during Twain's lifetime remained true to the original American edition. After Twain's death in 1910, however, his various publishers began to make alterations to the book. Additional changes surfaced in editions that came out after the book entered the public domain in 1931.

Armed with the information that Sweets supplied, I tracked down about twenty different edi-

tions of *Tom Sawyer* and scrutinized the chapter headings. I gradually realized that this whole issue was much more complicated than I had ever imagined. The twenty editions I found amounted to only a small fraction of the total number that have been published. To further complicate matters, the editions that I found were often based on previous editions which I could not locate. I did learn, however, that the chapter headings used in my Bantam edition matched the headings used in an edition published by Harper and Brothers in 1920. Just as Sweets had predicted, I found several editions published in the

early 1930s that used entirely new chapter headings. The John C. Winston Company, for example, brought out an edition in 1931 that used short headings of no more than four words. In the Winston edition, the heading for chapter 24 reads "Trials of a Hero."

By the time I had finished my research, I had examined a whole stack of editions of *Tom Sawyer* that did not use Twain's original chapter headings, and not one of them made reference to this fact on its cover or title page. Indeed, many of them had the words "Complete and Unabridged"

Mark Twain Sites

What's Past, and Passing, and to Come

Mark Twain House

When Mark Twain first visited Connecticut's capital in 1868, it was the center of America's publishing industry and home to a thriving literary community. Mark Twain was so taken with the city he would make it his home from 1871 to 1891, his most productive years as an author.

"Mark Twain's Hartford," a new brochure jointly produced by The Mark Twain House and the Connecticut Office of Tourism, directs visitors to 17 sites associated with the author. Some are familiar visitor attractions; others are less well known, even to local residents.

After touring The Mark Twain House, visitors may select from a variety of attractions, including art and history museums, parks, gardens, even a riverboat and antique carousel. The brochure includes maps, descriptions, contact numbers and web addresses for the sites on the tour, along with Twain's observations about his adopted hometown.

To request a free copy of "Mark Twain's Hartford," call The Mark Twain House at (860) 247-0998, ext. 40, e-mail your complete address to twain@hartnet.org, or write The Mark Twain House, 351 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105. For additional information on Twain's life in Hartford, visit www.MarkTwainHouse.org.

[Excerpted from a press release of the Mark Twain

House.]

Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies

*2000 Fall Lecture Series
The Trouble Begins at Eight"*

Thursday, Sept. 21, 2000

"Mark Twain and Kate Field; or, One Reason Twain Was Not a Feminist"—Gary Scharnhorst (University of New Mexico)

Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2000

"Susy Clemens and Louise Brownell: A Fated Friendship"—Linda Morris (University of California, Davis)

Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2000

"Jean Clemens: The Young Woman Behind the Myth"—Barbara Taylor (Cornell University Law Library)



emblazoned on their covers. These very words appear prominently on the cover of the Puffin Classics edition in which the headings are completely omitted.

Perhaps I am too much of a purist, but I believe that publishers should not tinker with an author's work, even if a book is in the public domain. Back in 1993, I spoke at a special symposium on censorship organized by the Mark Twain Memorial in Hartford, Connecticut. One of the most hotly debated issues at this event dealt with an edition of *Huckleberry Finn* in which the word "nigger" had been systematically deleted. At the time, I argued that even though this word repulsed me, it troubled me even more to see publishers bowdlerize a classic work of literature in the name of political correctness. I believe that rewriting or omitting original chapter headings is comparable to censoring out an offensive word. In both cases, the publisher is taking liberties with the text and violating the special trust that readers place with publishers. I feel that it is especially incumbent upon a publisher to adhere to the original text if the publisher prints the words "Complete and Unabridged" on the cover of the book.

Once I realized that the chapter headings in my Bantam edition did not match the original headings, I bought a copy of the more accurate Signet edition. I studied Twain's original chapter headings, and I think that they reflect his wit and his special ability to arouse the curiosity of his readers. Some of his chapter headings function as a set-up for a joke or a play on words. Chapter 9, for instance, takes place in a graveyard, and the heading reads, "A Solemn Situation — Grave Sub-

jects Introduced — Injun Joe Explains." Many of the headings are cryptic and only make sense after one has read the chapter. An example is the heading for chapter 2, which contains the famous scene in which Tom cons his friends into whitewashing the fence. This chapter begins with a heading that's apt and mysterious at the same time: "Strong Temptations — Strategic Movements — The Innocents Beguiled." In some cases, as in chapter 24, Twain's chapter headings highlight a character's emotional reactions. It seems to me that the part of the original heading that reads "Days of Splendor and Nights of Horror" captures Tom's vacillating feelings more accurately than the rewritten version that reads "Splendid Days and Fearsome Nights." Thus, in my opinion, Twain's original chapter headings add to the pleasure of reading *Tom Sawyer* and should be retained for their own sake as well as for the sake of textual accuracy.

Now that I am better informed about the strange history of Tom Sawyer's chapter headings, I am determined to have my students read an edition that is truly "complete and unabridged." My research revealed two such editions. The University of California Press has kept the original headings in its high quality, paperback edition of *Tom Sawyer*. As previously noted, the Signet edition also uses these headings, and it's a bit cheaper than the California Press edition. I am not sure which of these editions of *Tom Sawyer* I'll order for my students next semester, but I know I'll never again order the Puffin Classics edition. As a professor of English, I feel I have a professional obligation to use only editions that are true to the original published works.

Dates to Circle

- **May 24-27, 2001.** American Literature Association Annual Conference. Cambridge, MA.
- **August 16-18, 2001.** "Elmira 2001: The 4th International Conference on The State of Mark Twain Studies."
- **December 27-30, 2001.** Modern Language Association Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Everything You Need to Know . . .

ABOUT THE CIRCULAR. The *Mark Twain Circular*, newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America, was launched in January 1987 by Thomas A. Tenney (Editor of the *Mark Twain Journal*). James S. Leonard (The Citadel) assumed editorial responsibility with the February 1987 *Circular* and has continued in that capacity until the present. The *Circular* is published four times per year (Jan.–March, April–June, July–Sept., and Oct.–Dec.), and is mailed, by the editor, to all members of the Mark Twain Circle. The *Circular* prints news of Mark Twain events and scholarship, directories of members, short biographical articles and critical commentaries, and current bibliography. Subscribers are distributed among 44 states and 15 foreign countries.



ABOUT THE CIRCLE. The Mark Twain Circle of America was formed at an organizational meeting held at the 1986 Modern Language Association convention in New York; the membership has since grown to approximately 350. Current officers are displayed on p. 8. Past Presidents are Louis J. Budd, Alan Gribben, Pascal Covici, Jr., David E. E. Sloane, Victor A. Doyno, Michael J. Kiskis, and Shelley Fisher Fishkin. Past Executive Coordinators: Everett Emerson, James D. Wilson, Michael J. Kiskis, Laura Skandera-Trombley, and Joseph A. Alvarez. Although many members are academic specialists, the Circle also includes many non-academic Twain enthusiasts. The Circle is in communication with other Mark Twain organizations, including those associated with sites important in his life, and cooperates with them.



ABOUT THE MARK TWAIN JOURNAL. Founded in 1936 by Cyril Clemens, the *Mark Twain Journal* is the oldest American magazine devoted to a single author. In 1982, the *Journal* moved to its present home in Charleston, S.C., under the editorship of Thomas A. Tenney. There are two issues per year, Spring and Fall, with a new volume each year (rather than every second year, as in the past). The *Journal* tends to appear late, and begs your patient indulgence. New subscribers may wish to begin with the 2000 issues rather than the 2001. Back issues from 13:1 to the present are available at \$5.00 each, postpaid (\$2.50 on orders for ten or more; pre-1983 issues are thinner than modern ones, and some are badly reprinted). An index 1936-83 counts as a back issue.

To: Prof. John Bird
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Rock Hill, SC 29733

Please enroll me as a member of the **Mark Twain Circle of America** and subscriber to the *Mark Twain Circular*. I enclose a check for \$15.00 (\$16.00 for a non-U.S. address) made out to "Mark Twain Circle of America."

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Mark Twain Journal
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The Citadel
Charleston, SC 29409

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Current Mark Twain Bibliography

James S. Leonard
The Citadel

Current Mark Twain Bibliography is a means of giving notice of what's new in Mark Twain scholarship. Where annotations are used, they are in most cases descriptive blurbs provided by publishers (or in some cases, by authors) with value judgments edited out. If you have recently published something that you would like to have included in this list, send it to me by e-mail (leonardj@citadel.edu), or by other means.

Books

Griffith, Clark. *Achilles and the Tortoise: Mark Twain's Fictions*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998. Pp. iv + 272. Notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, 6" x 9". \$34.95. ISBN 0-8173-0903-9. [Reviewed for the *Mark Twain Forum* on October 14, 1999 by Kim Martin Long.]

Obenzinger, Hilton. *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999. Pp. xxi + 309. Bibliographical notes and index. Paperback, 6" x 9". \$18.95. ISBN 0-691-00973-2. [Reviewed for the *Mark Twain Forum* on July 20, 2000 by Barbara Schmidt.]

Articles

Budd, Louis J. "A Supplement to "A Chronology" in *Mark Twain Speaking*. *Essays in Arts and Sciences* 29 (Oct. 2000): 57–68.

Csicsila, Joseph. "Mark Twain as He Is Taught: Critical Trends and American Literature Anthologies, 1919–1999." *Essays in Arts and Sciences* 29 (Oct. 2000): 69–92.

Fulton, Joe B. *Mark Twain in the Margins: The Quarry Farm Marginalia and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. University of Alabama Press, 2000. Pp. 205. \$34.95. ISBN 0-8173-1033-9. The common characterization of Mark Twain as an uneducated and improvisational writer took hold largely because of the novelist's own frequent claims about his writing practices. But using recently discovered evidence—Twain's marginal notes in books he consulted as he worked on *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*—Joe Fulton argues for a reconsideration of scholarly views about Twain's writing process, showing that this great American author crafted his novels with careful research and calculated design. Fulton's transcription of marginalia and underlinings found in books in the Quarry Farm library comprise about half of this book. [Text drawn from dust jacket and Mark Twain Forum book notice.]

Pepper, Robert D. "Ned Buntline's Corner." *Dime Novel Round-up* (Aug. 2000): 134–36. Facsimile, transcription, and discussion of note, dated December 24, 1884, from E.Z.C. Judson ("Ned Buntline") to Mark Twain.