



# Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America  
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James S. Leonard, Editor, **Mark Twain Circular**  
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Thomas A. Tenney, Editor, **Mark Twain Journal**  
The Citadel, Charleston, SC 29409

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Number 1

## Mark Twain and Ned Buntline Revisited

The article "Mark Twain and Ned Buntline Aboard a Sacramento Riverboat," which appeared in the Oct.-Dec. 1993 *Mark Twain Circular* without attribution, was, in fact, authored by Robert A. Pepper, Professor Emeritus, San José State University. My (clearly attributed) apologies to Professor Pepper for failing to acknowledge his contribution. In the future I'll try to limit myself to blunders at my own expense.

James S. Leonard  
Editor, *MT Circular*

## Mark Twain at MLA 1993

The Mark Twain Circle was active at MLA in Toronto with two seminars in the program, and in the Mark Twain Suite two cocktail hour readings and two breakfast hour presentations. An Executive Committee meeting was also held. Titles of programs and details have been published previously, so I will not present them again here. The cocktail hour and breakfast sessions, as they have in the past, offered a good chance for younger and older

scholars to mix, trade professional information, and discuss publications and scholarly projects, as well as providing a setting in which the presenters could talk their papers rather than read them, and make engaging side comments and responses to questions that are often impossible in the more constricted formal program settings at MLA.

The Executive Committee accepted the **Executive Director's Report**, which showed our treasury to be in satisfactory condition. Rising costs and projects, however, led to a vote to raise the **dues to \$10 annually**, which is still a bargain as most author societies go.

David Barrow has carried to completion the project of **membership envelopes**, and anyone wishing a stack of envelopes to distribute at various conferences should write to Dave at Northern Illinois University; Mike Kiskis at Elmira will soon have a number for distribution as well.

Two **nominations** were made. Michael Kiskis was nominated to become Vice President of the Circle at the 1994 ALA Conference in San Diego, when Vic Doyno will rise to the Presidency. Jennifer Rafferty was nominated to join the Board as a member at large.

Affiliate Status at **SAMLA** for the Mark Twain Circle has been obtained by Joe Alvarez. The Executive Board named Joe as

David E. E. Sloane  
President, Mark Twain Circle  
University of New Haven  
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Victor Doyno  
Vice President, MT Circle  
SUNY, Buffalo  
Buffalo, NY 14214

Michael J. Kiskis  
Exec. Coordinator, MT Circle  
Elmira College  
Elmira, NY 14901

the official liaison with SAMLA. He has issued a **CALL FOR PAPERS** on *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (see "Call for Papers" below) with a May 30 deadline for reading at the SAMLA convention in Baltimore, November 11-14.

Our sister organization, the American Humor Studies Association, which loaned us several MLA slots while we were petitioning MLA for affiliate status, has offered to co-sponsor the Mark Twain suite with a modest annual donation in exchange for holding its executive board meetings in the suite, probably beginning in 1996. The Executive Board accepted this offer with thanks. Once the MLA reorganizes its convention slot assignment policies, the Circle will also hold its meetings in the suite rather than in an assigned conference room. **Special thanks are due to Tom Tenney and the Mark Twain Journal for co-sponsoring the Suite at Toronto.**

Victoria Thorpe-Miller is organizing the Circle's High School Initiative and is interested in collecting lists of names and strategies for the committee which she heads. Possible services for high school teachers might include a regular column in the *Circular* (featuring articles such as Jennifer Rafferty's "Resources for Teaching Mark Twain: A Mark Twain Newspaper" in this issue), a separate mailing on "classroom idea exchanges," and/or other services or inducements to join.

**The Twain Forum on Internet** was created by Taylor Roberts, who is now at the University of British Columbia. Two years old, it now has 170 subscribers and is free. The Circle is welcome to promote itself and its activities on the forum. Taylor would like to do more book reviews and convention paper presentations; he **requests and encourages** submissions.

Most happily, looking forward to the San Diego American Literature Association Convention on June 2-5, 1994, the Executive Board voted a Distinguished Achievement Award to Robert Hirst of the Mark Twain Papers, to be awarded at that time. This is advance word; a more formal announcement will be published closer to the time.

Programs for MLA 1994 (San Diego) and ALA 1995 (Baltimore) are in process now. The MLA program will be finalized on April 1,

and tentatively includes panels on Mark Twain and Sex, and Mark Twain and Other Authors. The panels for ALA-95 are tentatively scheduled to be on *Huck Finn* and on Mark Twain, travel, and related matters.

Respectfully submitted,  
David E. E. Sloane,  
President, Mark Twain Circle

### Mark Twain at ALA 1994

The Mark Twain Circle will present two panels at the American Literature Association Conference in San Diego, June 2-5:

I. "Conceptualizing Mark Twain's Style"  
(Chair: David E. E. Sloane, U of New Haven)

Papers:

1. Chris Kearns (Indiana U), "Divided in Twain: Detecting the Post-Colonial in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*"
2. Christine De Vinne (Ohio State U), "History, Heresy, and Heteroglossia: Multiple Voices in *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*"
3. William B. Millard (Rutgers U), "All the Poetry that you can't understand': Emersonian Strategies in the Language of Mark Twain"

Respondent: Laura Skandera-Trombley, SUNY-Potsdam

II. "Mark Twain and the Matter of Racial Response" (Chair: Vic Doyno, SUNY-Buffalo)

Papers:

1. Joseph Rice (U of Cincinnati), "Bad Boys Always Finish First: Sinners and Feints in works by Mark Twain and Langston Hughes"
2. Jeff Abernathy (Illinois College), "To Hell and Back: *Huckleberry Finn* and Racial Representation in the Twentieth Century"

Respondent: Jim Leonard, The Citadel

In addition, the American Humor Studies Association will sponsor a session titled "Jokes, Roles, and Identities," and the Mark Twain Circle will attempt to convene a special gathering (possibly including an open cash bar cocktail party) for the purpose of presenting Robert Hirst of the Mark Twain Papers with a

Distinguished Achievement Award.

David E. E. Sloane (U of New Haven)  
James S. Leonard (The Citadel)

### The Mark Twain Circle at Cancún: Call for Proposals

A "Conference on American Humor" is scheduled for Cancún, Mexico, December 8-11, 1994. Papers and Sessions are solicited. The conference will be jointly sponsored by the American Humor Studies Association and the Mark Twain Circle through the auspices of the American Literature Association.

This conference will address the state of the art in American Humor and Mark Twain Studies, presenting new ideas, reviewing standard concepts, and surveying the field and taking up issues of humorous presentations in American literature and culture generally.

Site: El Presidente Hotel, on the beach at Cancún, Mexico, luxury suites. Special Conference room rate: \$79/night plus 10% tax and \$1.50 maid charges, includes wake-up coffee or tea in room; reservations will be made directly with the hotel 1-800 number.

Date: December 8-11 (includes Saturday night stay-over). The ALA's designated travel agent may be able to arrange special airfares for attendees.

**Dec. 8, Evening:** Welcoming Session and cocktail party.

**Dec. 9-10, Sessions** scheduled by groups of topics.

**Dec. 11, Morning:** round table closing session.

Cost: Registration Fee: \$30, includes cocktail party and refreshments from 3:30 to 5:30 at afternoon sessions on the 9th and 10th. Registration will be through the ALA, and envelopes will be provided.

TO SUBMIT A PAPER, ABSTRACT, OR PANEL PROPOSAL, Write, Call, or Fax: Dr. David E. E. Sloane, University of New Haven, 300 Orange Ave., West Haven, CT 06516. Phone: TT at UNH 203-932-7371, MWF office 203-777-0667, home 203-624-4206; fax 203-932-1469.

### Mark Twain at SAMLA Call for Papers

In 1994 the Mark Twain Circle will for the first time sponsor a session at SAMLA (November 11-13, 1994; Baltimore, MD). The session title is "The Pudd'nhead Wilson Centennial: New Views." Send abstract or completed 10-page paper to Joe Alvarez, Central Piedmont Community College, P. O. Box 35009, Charlotte, NC 28235-5009. Telephone: 704-342-6691; fax: 704-342-5930; e-mail: jalvarez@char.vnet.net.

Participants must join SAMLA (\$15.00 per year); deadline May 1, 1994.

### Resources for Teaching Mark Twain: A Mark Twain Newspaper

Last semester I taught an undergraduate course on Mark Twain at Trinity College in Hartford, CT. I had a class of thirty-three students, who were predominantly freshmen with few prospective English majors. Since we were conveniently located in Hartford, which Mark Twain called home from 1871 to 1892, it made sense to have the students do some research on Twain's relationship to the life of the city. My students chose topics like The Monday Evening Club, Twain's Hartford Politics, the design of the Clemens home, Twain and Twichell, Twain and Mental Telegraphy, Twain and Christian Science, etc. They used primary materials from the Mark Twain Memorial's collection in Trinity's Watkinson Library to supplement their research in Twain biographies and in Andrews' book *Nook Farm: Mark Twain's Hartford Circle*.

The students gave reports on their findings to the class and then wrote newspaper articles on their research. We then created our own newspaper, which was professionally printed by the *Norwich Bulletin*. To aid in editing, students sent their articles into a DOCEX (all-campus) file for our course. Using Aldus PageMaker software, we formatted the paper and left blocked out areas for photos. The Mark Twain Memorial was generous in helping us with research and in allowing us to scan some photo-images into

our paper.

This project would be successful in a high school class as well as in undergraduate courses. If you would like more information on this project or you would like to receive a xerox copy of the *Twain Tribune*, please contact me at 203-297-5256. Limited quantities are available.

Jennifer L. Rafferty  
Visiting Assistant Professor  
Department of English  
Trinity College  
Hartford, CT 06106

### Circular Exchange

Everett Emerson is revising his literary biography of Samuel Clemens. He is taking advantage of books such as Carl Dolmetsch's and Jeff Stinebrink's, and he is seeking to eliminate all errors, including embarrassing ones reviewers found and those identified by friends. He welcomes comments from members of the Circle. Now retired, he can be reached at 130 Lake Ellen Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

### Mark Twain's "Original Jacobs": A Probable Explanation

Long ago, I opened up the puzzle of Mark Twain's recurring uses of the "original Jacobs" phrase in *American Notes and Queries* (April 1976, pp. 121-23), and with bulldog tenacity I am returning here to this problem fifteen years later. The most intriguing example is the appearance of a chapter title in *Life on the Mississippi* (henceforth: *LOM 50: The Original Jacobs*), with little in that chapter to which it seems related—aside from the general treatment of how "Mark Twain" acquired his world-famous pen-name. I think James M. Cox's discussion (in *Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor*, 1966) rightly linked the pseudonym to a central aspect of Clemens' persona as a writer: his propensity for telling lies or fictions—that is, "enlarging" upon facts. If we

will ever find a persuasive explanation of "original Jacobs," it should fulfill at least two requirements: chronologically, it should come at a period before or during the years when the pseudonym was first used; and biographically, it should have some significant relationship to Clemens' career.

There is a consensus today among scholars that "Mark Twain" relates (among other associations) to the *doubleness* of Clemens' life and personality, which combined "Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain" in fruitful and sometimes troubling ways. The very multiplicity of interpretations of the pen-name given by biographers and Clemens himself suggests a curious, almost furtive, desire to disclose and simultaneously to hide some things about the case. I am no psychoanalyst, but my learned guess is that this secretiveness derived from a sort of cultural schizophrenia—which eventually found expression in many other writings, and especially in the *Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts*. Of course, the most profound conflict faced by Clemens and the American people during his lifetime was that over *slavery*: the Negro and the Civil War. I want to propose that in the title he gave to Chapter 50 of *LOM*, Clemens was alluding to Harriet A. Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself*, and I am encouraged to formulate this hypothesis by what I have learned from Jean Fagan Yellin's recent edition (Harvard, 1987).

Though in 1978 I was puzzled by the identity of "Jacobs," I have little doubt about that now. Here I am concerned more about the possible meanings of "original," and the implications of Clemens' putting the phrase in quotation marks. Whatever evidence we may or may not find that he actually owned the Jacobs book, it seems to me incredible that Clemens never read it, or was ignorant of the discussion it evoked. Indeed, it seems likely that he was thinking of her case when in 1874 he wrote "A True Story," which (as Howells wrote him) had "the best and reallest kind of black talk in it"—an important stage towards the more complex "languages" of *Huckleberry Finn*. In her original 1861 Preface, Jacobs began by asserting that "this narrative is no fiction," her "adventures" are "strictly true." Now, for this Preface Harriet A. Jacobs adopted the authority of "L. Maria Child." As

Yellin tells us in her Introduction, the true story of Jacobs was written in 1857, but only published as a book in 1861: "Its title page credited the well-known abolitionist L. Maria Child as editor, but omitted the name of the author. The first-person narrator, who claimed to be relating her own autobiography, called herself Linda Brent" (xiii). Thus, the reader of *LOM* who probably knew about all or some of this would understand that Mark Twain intended him to think of the "original [Harriet] Jacobs"—and not of "Linda Brent"—a name that might have been more appropriate for a non-black author. All of Yellin's initial summary (xiii-xiv), concluding that "Jacobs articulates her struggle to assert her womanhood and projects a new kind of female hero," seems to me profoundly relevant to Clemens' persistent struggles to create genuine Negro characters in his fictions. At this level, the word "original" means: Harriet Ann Jacobs—and not "Linda Brent."

Other dimensions of this problem involve the complicated story of Child's services as "editor"—spelled out in great detail by Yellin in her introduction and notes. When Jacobs first began publishing her story in Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune* as "Letter from a Fugitive Slave" (1853), a note made clear that the only editorial changes were "corrections in punctuation and spelling, and the omission of one or two passages" (Yellin, xix). As Yellin writes: "... the language and syntax of her [Jacobs'] letters make gratuitous the suggestion that *Incidents* was written by anyone else" (xxi). Yellin quotes a letter by Child: "I abridged, and struck out superfluous words sometimes; but I don't think I altered fifty words in the whole volume" (xxii). Yellin's central point is that "Twentieth-century scholars of Afro-American literature assign considerable significance not only to the role of the white editors of slave narratives but also to the authenticating documents that accompany these texts" (xxii-xxiii). Also: "The struggle for freedom is not only recurrent, it is ubiquitous" (xxvii).

There is no need to repeat Yellin's Introduction, which elaborately and eloquently places the Jacobs story in various contexts of anti-slavery literature and problems especially of women slaves sexually abused by white masters. However, for Mark Twain

scholarship the problem remains of clarifying how the young Sam Clemens, during the years when he was "learning the river" and living out west, probably also learned about the Jacobs publications and the lively discussions concerning their authenticity—or lack of it. At this level, "original" means not only Jacobs-versus-Brent, but the Jacobs story *as originally written by Jacobs*.

This brings me to the quotation marks, which I initially assumed meant that Mark Twain was actually quoting a well-known use of "original Jacobs" that his readers would recognize. But this need not be the case. I.A. Richards, in *How to Read a Page* (1942), Chapter Ten; "Seem, Be, Do, See," once took up this subtle question:

The writers usually wobble every bit as much as their readers between naming something with their sentences and saying some other thing. While this is so their utterances must be the pivotal points of controversy. . . . Our usual procedures when we are aware of this snare are:

I. To put the name in quotation marks to hint that it is the word *as a name* we are talking about, not the things it names. . . . E.g. "Freedom" is the absence of restrictions. . . .

II. To expand the sentence to become an explicit naming statement. E.g. "I understand by Freedom, etc." . . . Quotation marks, as we have seen, have other uses and can easily infect a naming statement with the suspicion that the writer thinks little of Freedom (or What-not) anyhow. (167-168)

In brief, quotes are often used for purposes of irony, duplicity, or humor—appropriate of course for the writings of "Mark Twain." Thus, perhaps Clemens was not quoting in *LOM* but actually coining a phrase, based on the Jacobs controversy but intended as a sort of joke. (And see the discussion of "Originality" in Raymond Williams, *Keywords* [1976].)

To conclude, I think this hypothesis probable because it satisfies both the chronological and biographical requirements. Of course, it is still possible that some student of the 1850s and 1860s will run across texts in which the phrase was used, and perhaps even picked up by others, as a key to the H. A.

Jacobs problem. But somehow I find this less plausible than the probability that Clemens, during the years when he was writing *Huckleberry Finn* and *LOM*, made a political (abolitionist) joke, and liked this creation of his well enough to quote *himself* on a number of later occasions. In this case, the implication is less that his pen-name meant "safe water" (the most popular interpretation), and more that it was an expression of his involvement with "unsafe" problems of slavery, the Negro, and the anti-slavery movement. Anyway, I should certainly welcome critical discussions of this proposed explanation.

Sholom S. Kahn  
The Hebrew University  
Jerusalem

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Index to the *Mark Twain Circular* and "About Mark Twain," Vol. 6 (1992)

This index updates the ongoing listing of items in the *Mark Twain Circular* and items listed in Tom Tenney's "About Mark Twain." Each item is listed by its month's initials (see below) followed by the page number on which the item appears. Items listed in the annotated "About Mark Twain" section are indexed as "AMT," followed by the month's initials and the page number. (Example: "Blair, Walter AMT, M/A, 10.") Both authors and subjects discussed in each listing are indexed.

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Wesley Britton  
Sherman, TX

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Dates to Circle

**June 2-5, 1994.** The Mark Twain Circle will sponsor two sessions at the American Literature Association conference in San Diego. See "Mark Twain at ALA 1994" (p. 2) for details.

**June 22-26, 1994.** International Society for Humor Studies Conference; Ithaca, NY. Chair: Mary Ann Rishel, Writing Program, Ithaca College. Ph: 607-274-3324.

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**About Mark Twain**

Abbreviations used in this bibliographical series are listed in the January-March 1992 *Mark Twain Circular*. In addition, a combination of year, letter, and number refers to an entry in my *Mark Twain: A Reference Guide* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1977), and ALR refers to one of its supplements in the journal *American Literary Realism*. Readers wishing to keep up to date on Twain scholarship may also want to consult the list of other recommended bibliographic sources in the January-March 1992 *Circular*.

Thomas A. Tenney  
(Editor, *MT Journal*)

**Books on Twain**

**BERRET, ANTHONY J., S.J.** *Mark Twain and Shakespeare: A Cultural Legacy*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993. Though MT was professedly skeptical of Shakespeare's authorship and ranked him with other false "claimants," he was a valid part of MT's own Western background, settled and naturalized in American culture. "Not only did he write a book on Shakespeare . . . but he integrated scenes, language, and characters of Shakespeare into many of his other writings."

**MACHLIS, PAUL, with the Assistance of Deborah Ann Turner.** *Union Catalog of Letters to Clemens*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1992. A companion volume to the 1986 *Union Catalog of Clemens Letters*, this "provides description of, and access to, more than 18,000 letters to or about Samuel L. Clemens. Specifically, it is a record of documents, each of which meets one of the following criteria": a. It is written to MT, his wife, or one of their three daughters; b. it is written by Clara after 21 April 1910; c. it "is a letter between parties not members of Clemens's immediate family, and it contains information of significant relevance to the study of Clemens's life and work., as determined by editors at the Mark Twain Project." Following the Correspondents List are a 42-page Source

List and, on two microfiche cards, a Date list.

**QUIRK, TOM.** *Coming to Grips with "Huckleberry Finn": Essays on a Book, a Boy, and a Man*. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1993. "Most of these books have been or will be reprinted elsewhere." Contents: "Nobility out of Tatters: The Writing of *Huckleberry Finn*"; "Life Imitating Art: *Huckleberry Finn* and Twain's Autobiographical Writings"; "'Learning a Nigger to Argue': Quitting *Huckleberry Finn*"; "The Realism of *Huckleberry Finn*"; "*Huckleberry Finn*'s Heirs"; "Is *Huckleberry Finn* Politically Correct?"

**RODNEY, ROBERT M.** *Mark Twain Overseas: A Biographical Account of His Voyages, Travels, and Reception in Foreign Lands, 1866-1910*. Washington: Three Continents Press, 1993. An ambitious and valuable study, including appendices listing some of "Mark Twain's Friends and Notable Acquaintances Abroad" (with years "Encountered Abroad"); a list, with dates, of "Mark Twain's Lectures Abroad"; "Mark Twain's World Lecture Tour" (listing distances, numbers of days, and numbers of lectures, but not dates); numbers of foreign editions of MT's works; "Some British tributes" (slightly over one page of quotations); "Mark Twain's Periphrastics Overseas" (eight pages of places he visited, with dates given only broadly); and a bibliography which includes contemporary newspaper accounts and some recollections by persons who knew MT. It would be easy to snipe at this book for omissions (for example, Dolmetsch's important 1992 book, "*Our Famous Guest*": *Mark Twain in Vienna* receives no mention), but students investigating MT's travels will turn often and gratefully to this book, and from it to sources Rodney cites.

**SUNDQUIST, ERIC J.** *Mark Twain: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1994. A useful sampling of MT criticism from the 1980s and 1990s, including essays and excerpts from works by Louis J. Budd, Susan K. Gillman, David L. Smith, Arnold Rampersad, and other well-known scholars.

## Articles, etc.

**BOYER, JOHN.** "Perpetual Clemency: Why We Will always Be in Twaining." *Northeast* (Sunday magazine of the *Hartford Courant*) (5 July): 13. A sidebar to the Condon article (q.v.), this cites recent articles and television shows to demonstrate MT's continuing popularity. [Boyer is Executive Director of the Mark Twain Memorial, in Hartford.]

**CONDON, GARRET.** "Livy." *Northeast* (Sunday magazine of the *Hartford Courant*) (5 July 1992): 10-15. Strong praise for MT's wife, occasioned by the recent purchase of 79 letters (mostly unpublished) by the Mark Twain Memorial, from the estate of Chester Davis (long the editor of the *Twainian*, and the one-man Mark Twain Research Foundation). Condon depicts Livy as strong, intelligent, and much in love with her husband, quoting several letters in full; they show her love for him, and her personal integrity and concern for his. Condon has consulted Twain scholars Resa Willis, Laura Skandera-Trombley, and Justin Kaplan; Twainers will question a few interpretations, but this is a responsible and very appealing account.

**HOWE, LAWRENCE.** "Transcending the Limits of Experience: Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*." *American Literature*: 63.3 (September 1991): 420-39. *LOM*'s fictionalized autobiography stages MT's Mississippi experiences as allegories of the Civil War, to compensate for a lack of experience in the war which threatens his desire for representative status. Drawing on Freud and Bakhtin, Howe shows that the cub's conflicts with pilot/father figures undermines the authority of the pilot, supplanting it with that of the writer. Writerly authority formalizes diversity and expansiveness in the text of *LOM*, thereby conferring epic status on MT.

**HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN.** *W. D. Howells: Selected Literary Criticism*. 3 vols. Vol. 1, 1859-1885; Vol. 2, 1886-1897; Vol. 3, 1898-1920. Eds. (variously) Don L. Cook, Ronald Gottesman, Ulrich Halfmann, Christof K. Lohmann, David J. Nordloh, Donald Pizer. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana UP,

1993 (A Selected Edition of W. D. Howells, vols. 13, 21, 30). Students of MT will be grateful for the scrupulously edited and annotated texts (with textual histories) of Howells's writings on him and his works, not only those which were reprinted in *My Mark Twain* (1910.A3), but also the following, which were not, and are not listed in the 1977 *Mark Twain: A Reference Guide*: "[The Truthfulness of Mark Twain's Fiction]" from "Editor's Study," *Harper's Monthly* 74 (May 1887); "[Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee* and Popular Taste]" with a brief passage praising MT not in *My Mark Twain*, "[Mark Twain]," *Harper's Weekly* 41 (13 May 1897); "The New Historical Romances" (with brief praise of *RI* and *CY*), *North American Review* 171 (December 1900); "[Paine's Life of Mark Twain]," *Harper's Monthly* 126 (January 1913); "[Mark Twain's and John Holmes' Letters]," *Harper's Monthly* 136 (March 1918).

**McMILLAN, LIZ.** "New Theory about Mark Twain's Sexuality Brings Strong Reactions from Experts. Biographer Suggests Author's Early Male Friendships Were Really Romantic in Character." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (8 September 1993): A7-A8, A15. On a paper delivered at a conference at Elmira College in August, and book forthcoming in 1995, in which Andrew J. Hoffman argues that MT's friendships with Dan De Quille, Artemus Ward, and Clement Rice in Virginia City were homoerotic. "This is part of his biography that has escaped attention," Mr. Hoffman said in an interview last week. "It mounts up so much that it's hard to argue against it." It may be hard to argue against it, but Mr. Hoffman freely admits that he has no proof for his thesis, and he doubts that any will ever be found." A number of MT scholars queried have expressed disbelief.

Letters to the editor in the 6 October issue continue the discussion. Bill Houghton says: "There is an undertone throughout the article of great uneasiness about the possibility of Twain being homosexual, as if the very prospect made him somehow less than the writer he was." Gary Schmitz briefly writes: "The reports of my homosexuality are greatly exaggerated. Mark Twain."

**ABOUT THE CIRCULAR.** The *Mark Twain Circular* was launched in January 1987 by Thomas A. Tenney (Editor of the *Mark Twain Journal*), who edited the first issue, then passed the *Circular* baton to the present editor. An individual who pays dues to the Mark Twain Circle and/or subscribes to the *Mark Twain Journal* receives one subscription (four issues per year) to the *Circular*.

**ABOUT THE CIRCLE.** The Mark Twain Circle of America was formed at an organizational meeting held at the December 1986 Modern Language Association convention in New York; the membership has since grown to approximately 400. Current officers are: President—David E. E. Sloane; Vice President—Victor Doyno; Executive Coordinator—Michael J. Kiskis; Executive Committee—Shelley Fisher Fishkin, Pascal Covici, Jr., and Susan K. Harris. Past Presidents: Louis J. Budd, Alan Gribben, Pascal Covici, Jr. Past Executive Coordinators: Everett Emerson, James D. Wilson. 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 JOURNAL.** Founded in 1936 by Cyril Clemens, the *Mark Twain Journal* is the oldest American magazine devoted to a single author. In 1982 Mr. Clemens retired, and 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 1992 issues rather than the 1994. Although the Mark Twain Circle and the *Mark Twain Journal* are separate entities, Circle members enjoy a reduced subscription rate for the *Journal* (see coupon below for prices). 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.

<p>To: Prof. Michael J. Kiskis Exec. Coordinator, Mark Twain Circle Elmira College Elmira, NY 14901</p> <p>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 \$10.00 (\$11.00 for a non-U.S. address) made out to "Mark Twain Circle of America."</p> <p>----- (printed name) ----- (address) ----- (city, state, zip code)</p>	<p>To: Mark Twain Journal Box 1834 Charleston, SC 29402</p> <p>Please enter my subscription to the <i>Mark Twain Journal</i> for the year(s) circled: 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not a member of the Mark Twain Circle. Subscription rates are \$15 for one year, \$28 for two years, \$43 for three years, or \$50 for four years.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am a member of the Mark Twain Circle, or about to join. Subscription rates are \$10 for one year, \$18 for two years, \$25 for three years, or \$30 for four years.</p> <p>----- (printed name) ----- (address) ----- Libraries: \$17.00/year, no discount Foreign: Add \$2.00/year for postage</p>
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