



Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America

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Everett Harvey Emerson

Louis J. Budd
Duke University

For readers of the *Mark Twain Circular* the most salient fact about the rich, variegated career of Everett Emerson (1925-2002) is that he gave the originative start to the Mark Twain Circle of America. While others doubtless meant to swing into action someday, he made the first move and persevered through the paperwork to satisfy the MLA as well as state and federal laws (so demanding that there's seemingly no loophole for a saturnalia like Enron). Choosing to serve as secretary-treasurer rather than the founding president, he worked to build an active membership that included non-academics. When offered the presidency later, he declined, wanting to avoid any appearance of an insider's clique.

Twainians also particularly owe Everett for *The Authentic, Mark Twain: A Literary Biography of Samuel L. Clemens* (1994), which sold so well that the University of Pennsylvania Press welcomed the expanded and updated *Mark Twain: A Literary Life* (2000). Anybody who reads footnotes knows that his book has emerged as the most often consulted synthesis of Clemens-Twain's personal trajectory, public career, and writings. More narrowly, his "Afterword" for *The Prince and the Pauper*

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Nobody's Fool: A Tribute to Hamlin Hill

Jeffrey Steinbrink
Franklin and Marshall College

The Mark Twain community mourns the loss of Hamlin Hill, who died July 16, 2002, in Los Alamos, New Mexico, at the age of 70.

Reasons for remembering, and for missing, Ham Hill come easily. Savvy, articulate and personable, he was a natural leader among a generation of critics who brought to Mark Twain's writing and to his life the intelligence and sophistication it deserves. He leaves behind a body of work that we prize, as we did Ham himself, for its originality, directness, and abiding iconoclasm. Whether savoring the complexities of Sam Clemens's fretful relationship with Elisha Bliss or looking un sentimentally into the writer's later darkness or tracing more broadly the historic contours of American humor, Ham's writing inspired and chal-

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Everett Harvey Emerson (cont. from p. 1)

in the Oxford Mark Twain attracted a request for a preface to a British paperback and, this past year, another for a Signet Classics reprint. Among Everett's services "in kind," he co-chaired the conference (another first) in 1989 at the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies.

For still another first, Everett was the originative force behind the Early American Literature Section (later Division) of the MLA. When its newsletter developed into a triquarterly journal, he stepped up as its editor. Though that result may look like Huck's "preforeordination," the autobiographical "On Becoming an Early Americanist" (*William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser. 52 [1995], 473-78) details a nuanced, free-willed series of choices. Born in Massachusetts, he did graduate from Harvard, and his first publications did center on Puritanism. His friends considered them in character with his habitual seriousness, ideal of self-accountability, and steadiness of purpose. Occasionally I wondered how his Puritans and Mark Twain fitted as mental house-companions. Rather than theorize that ménage somehow, I will testify that he enjoyed Twain's universe on its own irreverent terms. Though Everett never offered up a joke or an ironic judgment that I can recall, he also never forgot or regretted that Twain was humorous down to the core. How service as a U. S. Marine (second lieutenant) at the end of World War II played into Everett's later choice of emphases I didn't feel intelligent enough to ask.

Though Twainians think of Everett as a forebear, he considered American literature his "field" and liked teaching the standard surveys. During his years at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, he would volunteer as a guide at the Emily Dickinson house; after moving to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, he organized an ambitiously successful conference on the centenary of her death.

Presently, the edition of Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*, done with his wife Katherine and based on the holograph manuscripts, waits for a publisher's commitment.

Everett likewise considered teaching not a subsidy for, or a time-debit against, bankable scholarship, but a profession to be learned patiently and deepened by experience. He knew many kinds of students and departments, having taught in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Florida, California, and North Carolina and at a prep school, private colleges, and state universities, both flagship and satellite. After he settled in at UNC-CH, we met regularly for lunch, each of us readied with a written agenda and handouts. As he (we) turned into the old guard, he never wailed about "what's the world coming to?" To the end he spoke cordially of undergraduates as well as graduate students and tried to stay open to the accelerating changes. I hope he left our lunches feeling at least half as positive and well-fed mentally as I did.

Gradually (because Everett didn't parade his tastes) I found out how much he enjoyed classical music, very much including grand opera; he turned out for, and even traveled overseas to, live performances. Once I gathered that he also fancied jazz, which he didn't bring up again because he had felt no echoes. He liked to do gourmet cooking and share it with friends and to look after rose bushes and the family's cats. And he kept up with current affairs, starting with local government (so often ignored by academics as if they were just passing through their community for twenty or even forty years); he found cause and time for letters-to-the-editor. But he managed all his interests without complaining (or subtly bragging) about how busy he was.

Everett was committed wholeheartedly to friendships, to cultivating them as carefully as his rose bushes. When he argues with Captain Stormfield about life "down there," he will rank his friends in the Mark Twain Circle high among what he misses. As for us, the Circle now feels smaller, poorer.

lenged many of us to join the critical fray at something approaching his level. Its boldness will continue to challenge us, but so should its subtlety and polish, the nuanced qualities that were sometimes eclipsed by Ham's vitality, in print and in person.

Ham was fun to be with. He was a big presence, the sort of person who filled a panel discussion or a dinner party or the porch at Quarry Farm with good talk and acerbic, affectionate good humor. He was generous with his friends—often all the more so when he disagreed with them—and with people who were new to him. An easy raconteur and a good listener, he must have been a wonderful teacher, for a long while at the University of New Mexico and then at Texas A&M. He directed NEH seminars, was a Guggenheim Fellow and a Fulbright Scholar, and in 1984-85 coordinated the international celebration of Huck Finn's centenary, bringing to each adventure the energy of a man who took great, full pleasure in life. To all who knew him it was clear that the deepest source of that pleasure was his family. Our condolences, then, to his children and especially to his wife, Arlette.

Ham Hill was present at the creation of many enterprises that have for decades enhanced the study of Mark Twain. He was among the tribe of scholars who met at the nexus of Iowa and California to found the editorial effort that has evolved into the Mark Twain Project. He was a steady friend of and sometimes resident at the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Elmira College. He edited volumes and series of volumes of Twain's work and sat on editorial boards of journals such as *American Literary Realism* and *Studies in American Humor*.

To be in Ham's company with Mark Twain for a topic was to appreciate his intuitive feeling for—I'm tempted to say his understanding of—Samuel Clemens. It

rose from the reservoir of Ham's long association with the writer, no doubt, but it was also a sort of instinct for the man. Maybe that instinct accounts for his sometimes sharing Clemens's thundering exasperation, rarely more poignantly than in his 1974 essay "Who Killed Mark Twain?" There he indicted most Twain scholarship as arid, bloodless, trivial, self-promoting, and just plain foolish. He called for work that better measured, and measured up to, Mark Twain—to his scope, his talent, his humanity.

That call continues to ring. Of the many legacies Hamlin Hill left us, none surpasses the example he set by doing important work with such grace and spirit, by treating us with such generous candor, by living so well.

Call for Papers
American Literature Association
Annual Conference

Dates: May 22-25, 2003

Location: Hyatt Regency Cambridge
575 Memorial Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139

Conference Director: Maria Karafilis
(California State University, Los Angeles)

Conference Fee: \$75 (\$25 for Graduate Students, Independent Scholars and Retired Faculty). The conference fee includes a food credit for those who pre-register by April 15, 2003.

Deadline for Proposals: January 30, 2003

Address for Papers and Proposals:
Professor Maria Karafilis
English Department
California State University
Los Angeles, CA 90032-8110
Fax: (323) 343-6470
Email: mkarafi@calstatela.edu

The primary source for information on the American Literature Association and its activities is its website:

www.americanliterature.org

Mark Twain Sites

What's Past, and Passing, and to Come

Elmira College *Center for Mark Twain Studies*

Time of Transition

The Center for Mark Twain Studies made some important changes this spring. Gretchen Sharlow, Director of the Center for almost ten years, retired at the end of May. She began her career with the Center in 1983, shortly after Quarry Farm was given to Elmira College by Jervis Langdon, Jr. She worked closely with former Directors, the late Dr. Herbert Wisbey, Jr. and the late Dr. Darryl Baskin. During the success of her years as Director, Gretchen accomplished an astounding amount of important and prestigious work. Under her leadership, a number of educational programs took place at Quarry Farm, and scores of scholars were awarded Quarry Farm Fellowships. Gretchen also painstakingly planned and brought to fruition four quadrennial conferences on The State of Mark Twain Studies. She was an advocate and supporter of many scholars and has been credited in dozens of books and articles for her assistance with their research. While publishing Quarry Farm Papers and sending newsletters to Friends, Gretchen also was reading hundreds of papers on Mark Twain that crossed her desk. Further, she was instrumental in attracting to Elmira filmmaker Ken Burns, who addressed Quarry Farm and Elmira in a good portion of his film *Mark Twain*.

During the June 2, 2002 Commencement activities at Elmira College, Gretchen introduced the incoming Director of the Center, Jane McCone. Jane's background is in history studies and museum work. She attended the Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies, and was the Director of Hanford Mills Museum, in East Meredith, New York for eight years. While there, Jane worked with historic preservation, program development, collections management, exhibition planning and implementation, grant writing, and disaster planning. Jane also worked as a museum consultant, establishing affiliations with sites such as the Speed Skating Hall of Fame in Saratoga Springs, New York; Erie Canal Village in Rome, New York; The National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York—to name only a few. Her vast knowledge of history, coupled with her extensive experience in museum work, will complement well the work that the Center has thus far accomplished.

The Mark Twain House

"Never an Uninteresting Life" Symposium

"There was never yet an uninteresting life. Such a thing is an impossibility. Inside the dullest exterior there is a drama, a comedy and a tragedy." — Mark Twain

To commemorate Twain's interest in biography, The Mark Twain House will sponsor "Never an Uninteresting Life: The Art of Biography," a day-long symposium focusing on the art and craft of the biography and featuring nationally recognized authors, including three recipients of the Pulitzer Prize: Justin Kaplan (*Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain*), William McFeely (*Grant: A Biography*), and Edmund Morris (*The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* and the current bestseller *Theodore Rex*).

The symposium, which will examine the role of the biographer in creating, interpreting and defining the popular image of public figures, will be held on Saturday, October 5 in the Wallace Stevens Theater at The Hartford Financial Services Group, 690 Asylum Avenue, Hartford. The symposium will feature a keynote address from Kaplan followed by two panels, a morning session with the authors discussing "Biography of Cultural Icons," and an afternoon panel about presidential biographies.

John V. Boyer, Executive Director of The Mark Twain House, noted that even though Twain loved the comedy and drama of a person's life, Twain also believed that "biographies are but the clothes and buttons of the man—the biography of the man himself cannot be written."

"We're a nation of people fascinated with the public icons of popular culture and national identity," Boyer said. "That's why we've assembled this panel of distinguished authors who can explore the role of the biographer in creating a work that Twain suggested could not be written."

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

Melton, Jeffrey Alan. *Mark Twain, Travel Books, and Tourism: The Tide of a Great Popular Movement.* University of Alabama Press, 2002. 184 pages. Cloth \$34.95. This study reevaluates an often-overlooked aspect of Mark Twain's writing—his travel narratives—and demonstrates their centrality to his identity and thinking. Travel books, Jeffrey Melton asserts in this study, are vital to Mark Twain's identity as a writer and to his cultural influence, and not just, as many critics have argued, preliminary sketches or failed attempts at fiction. Furthermore, the identity that Twain establishes for himself in these books as the arch “tourist” provides the most compelling perspective from which to view his entire body of work. Melton begins by outlining the conventions of travel writing in the 19th century and proceeds to document Twain's subversion of those conventions to his own ends: a reinvention of the genre. The remainder of the study examines Twain's travel narratives individually, charting a progression from the Old World in *The Innocents Abroad* and *A Tramp Abroad*, in which Twain confronts the limitations of the “tourist” experience of life and discovers the powers of

Call For Papers *Mark Twain Annual*

The Mark Twain Annual, the new annual publication of the Mark Twain Circle of America, will publish its premiere issue Fall 2003. The journal's focus will be on criticism and pedagogy related to Mark Twain and his works. Please send articles, proposals, or queries, with a deadline of July 2003, to the editor:

John Bird, Editor
The Mark Twain Annual
250 Bancroft
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Winthrop University
Rock Hill, SC 29733
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imagination and self-delusion, to the New World in *Roughing It* and *Life on the Mississippi*, in which Twain seeks to reconcile his “outsider” identity with a search for home. The final section considers Twain's last travel narrative, *Following the Equator*, as Twain searches for a complete escape from the “tourist” perspective and its imperialistic implications. In the process, Melton shows, Twain's travelogues highlight the author's philosophical and moral evolution as a writer from the worldviews of “innocence” to “experience.” [Text from University of Alabama Press release.]

Articles

Bush, Harold K. “‘Broken Idols’: Mark Twain's Elegies for Susy and a Critique of Freudian Grief Theory.” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 57 (Fall 2002): 237-68. Contains in the appendix the first complete publication of “Broken Idols” ever. This powerful and moving elegy was written by Twain on the two-year anniversary of Susy's death in August 1898. [Text from *Mark Twain Forum* posting by the author.]

Zehr, Martin. "The Western Vistas of Willa Cather and Mark Twain: A Study in Contrasts." *Teaching Cather* 2.2 (Spring 2002): 4-10. Because both writers are often taught in literature classes at all levels, we are confident that enterprising teachers will glean productive teaching ideas from this comparison. The fascinating photographs that accompany Zehr's article (including our cover photograph) take us for a time back to the turn-of-the-century cultural and aesthetic world which spawned some of our greatest literary works. Photos of the aging Twain and the young Cather capture our imaginations in ways that enhance the distinctions Martin Zehr draws between their literary productions. [Text from *Teaching Cather* editorial introduction.]

Dates to Circle

- **October 9-12, 2002.** Western Literature Association Conference. Tucson, AZ.
- **November 2, 2002.** Mark Twain Birthday Party. Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society (25 Nottingham Court); 7:00 p.m. Buffalo, NY.
- **November 15-17, 2002.** South Atlantic Modern Language Association Annual Conference. Wyndham Baltimore Inner Harbor Hotel. Baltimore, MD.
- **December 27-30, 2002.** Modern Language Association Annual Conference. New York, NY.

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 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 14 foreign countries.

ABOUT THE ANNUAL. Beginning in 2003 the Mark Twain Circle will publish an annual volume titled *The Mark Twain Annual*, edited by John Bird (Winthrop University and featuring criticism and pedagogy related to Mark Twain and his works. See “Call for Papers” on p. 5.

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, Shelley Fisher Fishkin, and Laura Skandera Trombley. Past Executive Coordinators: Everett Emerson, James D. Wilson, Michael J. Kiskis, Laura Skandera Trombley, Joseph A. Alvarez, and John Bird. Although many members are academic specialists, the Circle also includes many non-academic Twain enthusiasts.



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. The *Journal* tends to appear late, and begs your patient indulgence. New subscribers may wish to begin with the 2001 issues rather than the 2002.

To: Prof. Joseph Csicsila
Exec. Coordinator, Mark Twain Circle
English Department
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

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