Mark Twain

Biography

On Nov. 30, 1835, the small town of Florida, Missouri, witnessed the birth of its most famous son. Samuel Langhorne Clemens was welcomed into the world as the sixth child of John Marshall and Jane Lampton Clemens. Little did John and Jane know, their son Samuel would one day be known as Mark Twain - America's most famous literary icon.

Approximately four years after his birth, in 1839, the Clemens family moved 35 miles east to the town of Hannibal. A growing port city that lies along the banks of the Mississippi, Hannibal was a frequent stop for steam boats arriving by both day and night from St. Louis and New Orleans.

Samuel's father was a judge, and he built a two-story frame house at 206 Hill Street in 1844. As a youngster, Samuel was kept indoors because of poor health. However, by age nine, he seemed to recover from his ailments and joined the rest of the town's children outside. He then attended a private school in Hannibal.

When Samuel was 12, his father died of pneumonia, and at 13, Samuel left school to become a printer's apprentice. After two short years, he joined his brother Orion's newspaper as a printer and editorial assistant. It was here that young Samuel found he enjoyed writing.

At 17, he left Hannibal behind for a printer's job in St. Louis. While in St. Louis, Clemens became a river pilot's apprentice. He became a licensed river pilot in 1858. Clemens' pseudonym, Mark Twain, comes from his days as a river pilot. It is a river term which means two fathoms or 12-feet when the depth of water for a boat is being sounded. "Mark twain" means that it is safe to navigate.

Because the river trade was brought to a standstill by the Civil War in 1861, Clemens began working as a newspaper reporter for several newspapers all over the United States. In 1870, Clemens married Olivia Langdon, and they had four children, one of whom died in infancy and two died in their twenties. Their surviving child, Clara, lived to be 88, and had one daughter. Clara's daughter died without having any children, so there are no direct descendants of Samuel Clemens living.


Mark Twain passed away on April 21, 1910, but has a following still today. His childhood home is open to the public as a museum in Hannibal, and Calaveras County in California holds the Calaveras County Fair and Jumping Frog Jubilee every third weekend in May. Walking tours are given in New York City of places Twain visited near his birthday every year.

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Selected Materials Available at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

Works by the Author

Print Books

Fiction:

BA Call Number: 813.4 T969adv 1990 (E)

Twain, Mark. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Illustrated by Donald McKay. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, [1948].
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BA Call Number: 128 T969m (B4)

Collected Works:

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Miscellaneous:

BA Call Number: 818.409 T969m (F1 -- Young People’s Library)

BA Call Number: 818.409 Twa M (B2 -- Rare Books -- Closed Stacks)

BA Call Number: 813.4 T969mi (E)
**e-Books**

**Fiction:**


**Travel:**


Miscellaneous:

www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/19987 [accessed 31 Jul 2010]


**Audiobooks**


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BA Call Number: 833 B678 (F1 -- Young People’s Library)
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BA Call Number: 813.4 M (E)

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“About Mark Twain”. Classic Authors.net/Great Literature Online. www.classicauthors.net/twain  [accessed 23 Oct 2010]


