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## ABSTRACT

This report describes a long-range project designed to make available to the general public all the printed works authored by Mark Twain in "authoritative texts" that correspond as closely as possible with his last known or discoverable intent. Briefly outlined are the project's methodology for selection of 13 editors working under a four-man editorial board, the specific responsibilities of each volume editor, and the editorial procedure followed, including machine and sight collations of variant texts. The report concludes with a review of progress to date and a discussion of problems related to the satisfactory completion of the project. (JK)

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FINAL REPORT  
Project No. 2736  
Contract No. OE-5-10-031

AUTHORITATIVE TEXTS OF THE PUBLISHED WORKS OF MARK TWAIN

October 1969

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
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John C. Gerber

October, 1969

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University of Iowa

Iowa City, Iowa

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE  
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## Introduction

Because accidental and deliberate corruptions have developed in all of the texts of Mark Twain's printed works, no one of them is precisely as he intended it to be. The central purpose of this project, therefore, has been to prepare authoritative texts of all of his printed works. By "authoritative texts" we mean texts that correspond insofar as possible with Mark Twain's last known or discoverable intent. Along with an authoritative text for each published work we are preparing an introduction, explanatory notes, and textual notes. In short the reader will be supplied not only with the text that Mark Twain intended but also with aids that will permit him to recapture its development.

Only the preparation of the text, the introduction, and the notes falls within the province of this project. The publication of the text is a matter of agreement between the Center for Textual Studies of the University of Iowa and the University of California Press. No federal funds have been diverted to the manufacture, advertizing, distribution, or selling of the final volumes. By agreement with the Office of Education, the introduction to each volume will be in the public domain. By agreement with the Office of Education and the Mark Twain Estate, rights to hitherto unpublished words will remain with the Mark Twain Estate. Otherwise the published volumes will be copyrighted by the University of California Press. The Press has agreed that within two years after the appearance of each volume in a cloth edition, permission for a nominal fee will be granted to reputable paperback publishers to bring out the volume in paperback editions. Thus the project will result in Mark Twain's works being made easily and inexpensively available to all students and to the general public.

Although the bulk of the editing on most of the volumes is finished, much checking, and, of course, publication are still ahead of us. The first three volumes should appear in the late fall of 1971, and the others should appear at the rate of three a year until all twenty-four or twenty-five have appeared. By agreement in the contract amendment dated 30 July 1965, three copies of each volume will be submitted to the Project Officer as it appears.

## Method

The method of the project may be described under three heads (1) selection of volume editors, (2) responsibilities

of each volume editor, (3) editorial procedure.

1. Selection of volume editors. Heading the project is an editorial board composed of John C. Gerber (principal investigator), Paul Baender (secretary), Walter Blair, William M. Gibson, and William B. Todd. This editorial board selected the individual volume editors and developed the guidelines to be followed by each. A list of the editors and their volumes is as follows:

Frederick Anderson University of California, Berkeley	<u>Autobiography</u> (2 vols.)
Paul Baender University of Iowa	<u>What Is Man? and Other Philosophical Works</u>
Howard Baetzhold Butler University	Short fiction, middle and late periods (2 vols.)
Alan Bates Northeastern Illinois St. College	<u>Life on the Mississippi</u>
Gladys Bellamy Southwest State College, Oklahoma	<u>Following the Equator</u>
Walter Blair University of Chicago	<u>Huckleberry Finn</u>
Edgar M. Branch Miami University (Ohio)	The short early fiction
Louis Budd Duke University	Political writings (2 vols.)
Leon T. Dickinson University of Missouri	<u>Innocents Abroad</u>
Paul Fatout Purdue University	The Speeches
John C. Gerber University of Iowa	<u>Tom Sawyer, Tom Sawyer Abroad, Tom Sawyer, Detective</u> (1 vol.)
Hamlin Hill University of Chicago	<u>The Gilded Age</u>
Franklin R. Rogers University of California (Davis)	<u>Roughing It</u>

Roger Solomon  
Case-Western Reserve University

The Prince and the Pauper

Albert E. Stone, Jr.  
Emory University

Joan of Arc  
A Tramp Abroad

John Tuckey  
Purdue University at Calumet

The literary criticism

William B. Todd  
University of Texas

Bibliography

Arlin Turner  
Duke University

Pudd'nhead Wilson

James D. Williams  
Fairleigh-Dickinson

A Connecticut Yankee in  
King Arthur's Court

Short travel pieces

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2. The responsibility of each volume editor. Each volume editor has been responsible for producing the following:

- a. An authoritative text that is the result of a careful study of all of the relevant manuscripts and all of the editions of the text or texts published during Mark Twain's lifetime.
- b. An introduction that describes the genesis, the composition, publication, and critical reception of the text or texts.
- c. Explanatory notes that identify obscure names and places, and provide sources of quotations and other factual allusions.
- d. Textual notes that describe manuscripts, discuss problems in establishing the texts, and explain difficulties in particular passages. These notes also provide an enumerative bibliography of relevant texts and tables of variant readings.

3. Editorial procedure. The steps involved in the preparation of the edition have been as follows:

- a. Selection and training of editors. The editorial board selected editors for each of the volumes and called them together for a training session. Each editor was provided with an elaborate set of guidelines designed to make the editing process as efficient as

possible and the results as accurate and as uniform as possible. Editors also met together annually at the time of the MLA meetings.

- b. Machine collation. For each work, assistants in the Iowa Center for Textual Studies machine-collated several specimens of the first typesetting. This operation took place on the Hinman Collator, an elaborate device for superimposing mirror images and thus allowing for ready and accurate detection of all manner of variants. Lists of variants were compiled, checked, and sent to the appropriate volume editors.
- c. Sight collation. Assistants in the Iowa Center or the volume editors themselves supervised sight collations of (1) manuscripts and first editions, and (2) specimens of the first typesetting and specimens of all subsequent typesettings that appeared during Mark Twain's life. To collate a manuscript a volume editor had to travel to the place where it is kept. Sight collating printed versions involved readers gathering at a table, each with a copy of one version in front of him. Two copies of each version were represented at the table so that each reader had another checking on him. One reader read aloud from his specimen while the others followed in theirs. Variants were entered on cards or sheets, checked, and turned over to the volume editor.
- d. Selection of the basic text. Before beginning the process of editing each work, the volume editor selected as his basic text the version which in his opinion most nearly exhibited Mark Twain's last intent. In such a text he would have to make the fewest number of changes.
- e. Editing. The editor then determined authority among the variants bringing to bear all of the internal and external evidence available to him.
- f. First check. Before sending his completed manuscript to the editorial board, the editor with the help of his assistants checked his text and notes for accuracy.
- g. Second check. When each manuscript was received in Iowa City, the introduction was sent to Professor Blair of the University of Chicago for checking, the explanatory notes to Professor Gibson of New York University, and the text and textual notes to Professor William B. Todd of Texas University.

- h. Third check. The several parts once more back in Iowa City, they were all checked again by Professors Gerber and Baender of the University of Iowa.
- i. Fourth check. The total manuscript was then sent back to the volume editor with the suggestions of the board. He made such adjustments as were called for, and checked his work once more.
- j. Fifth check. The manuscript was then sent to Berkeley where Professor Frederick Anderson and his assistants went all over it again, checking each detail against the original source. If mistakes were found, they were checked out with Iowa City and the volume editor. After this long and arduous process, the manuscript was finally sent to the printer. No process beyond this point was supported by government funds.

### Results

To date the results of the project are as follows:

(1) seven volumes have been submitted to the editorial board; one is in the hands of the editor at the University of California Press; two others are scheduled for submission to the press this fall; four are in various stages of examination by the editorial board. The volume already at the press is What Is Man? and Other Philosophical Writings; the two to be submitted this fall are The Innocents Abroad and Roughing It; the other four are The Gilded Age, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Pudd'nhead Wilson, and Joan of Arc.

(2) work has been carried to various degrees on almost all other volumes. Machine collation has been completed for all, and most sight collations are also done. The explanatory notes and introductions are still in progress.

### Discussion

To this point the Mark Twain project is successful, but the results have been slower and more difficult to achieve than we anticipated. The textual work requires much time and expense, in large part because of the checks for accuracy that have proved necessary. We did not anticipate at the outset, for example, that five checks for each text would be necessary before we could feel reasonably confident of the accuracy of our work--or before the books could receive the seal of approval of the Center for Editions of American Authors. The process of determining formats for the parts of the volumes has also taken more time and reconsideration

than expected. However, the work now submitted to the press satisfies our original standards, and all evidence indicates that the remaining volumes will conform with them.

### Conclusions

We conclude that the project has proved itself worthy of undertaking, and that its satisfactory completion is feasible. Our procedures, with their modifications, are suitable to the subject. Our methods are generally appropriate, though we have discovered that greater consolidation of personnel is required for the quickest and most efficient handling of textual matters. We would recommend that groups considering similar large-scale editions involve as few scholars as possible and preserve a substantial margin of time and funds for checking and revision of textual details.

### Summary

The editing of the printed works of Mark Twain began from an awareness that this author had never been systematically edited, that the texts of his works had become seriously corrupt, and that the probability of his continuing importance justified establishing authoritative texts of his works and providing basic explanation for them. The project began with the creation of an editorial board and the selection of twenty volume editors. The contents of the total edition and of particular volumes were designated, and procedures for gathering textual and other data were defined. The latter especially concerned procedures for collation and the checking of collation. Because of the great complexity of the undertaking, work has proceeded slowly. The results of the project to the present are: seven volumes submitted to the editorial board; one volume at the press; two volumes to go to the press in the current season; four others being processed by the general editors. The project has produced results according to standards originally set forth, though the completion of the work will take longer than at first anticipated.