REPRESENTATION OF FATHER-SON RELATIONS IN THE
MAJOR NOVELS OF SAMUEL CLEMENS

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CHAPTER I

JOHN MARSHALL CLEMENS

John Marshall Clemens was an unemotional man, quiet, sober, honorable. He was Virginia born, which was important in his day and time; and he was proud of his aristocratic inheritance. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word, a man to be respected in any of the small, frontier communities west of the Alleghenies.

Mark Twain describes his father as "a proud man, a silent austere man. . . ."¹ John Marshall Clemens did not get emotionally involved with anyone. He kept people, even members of his family, at an emotional distance.

He was tall, quiet, dignified. When he spoke, people listened, for he was always thought of as a man of intellect and authority. In the hill country of Tennessee and in the rambling towns along the Mississippi River, John Marshall Clemens was a man to be respected, for he epitomized the rugged individuality which characterized the American west. He was of the breed that forged cities in the uninhabited

forests, that drove America to the banks of the Mississippi and beyond. He was the perfect example of the no-nonsense people who had created the country and carried it through its stormy infancy, for he was a man who was well born, a man of good blood. Dixon Wecter gives a physical description which conveys a fairly good idea of his personality as well:

His tall spare frame, piercing gray eyes, hair brushed vigorously back, and mouth that rarely smiled and never laughed, belonged to a stern, proud, frugal disposition whose bent determined his life.2

But for all of his pride, his aristocratic manner, and his rugged individuality, he was a failure, as a man, as a husband, and as a father. It is his lack of emotion, his inability to express or receive love, with which this thesis is mainly concerned, for it is his emotional vacuum that so greatly affected his fourth son, Samuel Clemens.

John Marshall Clemens was born in Campbell County, Virginia, on August 11, 1798. He was the first son of Samuel and Permilia Clemens, and he was named after a rising young Virginia lawyer who was later to become the perfect example of the aristocratic Virginian, holding a position of great responsibility in a very honorable and gentlemanly manner. One can surmise that the very name itself chosen for the lad

could well prove to be a heavy burden to bear, for how could a John Marshall afford the luxury of failure?

John's father, Samuel Clemens, was a relatively well-to-do property owner in Virginia. He had a small, but productive farm, and he owned stock: a few head of cows, a few horses, thirty slaves, and assorted other animals. By practical standards, the Clemens place was a good farm, but in the true Southern spirit, it was not a farm, but a "plantation." Northern immigrants, European cast-offs, scratched out their livings on farms, but the Southern gentleman who pursued agriculture as a profitable pastime owned a "plantation."

Samuel Clemens worked hard at being a Southern gentleman, a Virginia gentleman. He was acutely aware of the Southern code of social value, a code which was based on blood lines and birth rights. Young John Marshall was to be greatly influenced by his father's own aristocratic-mindedness, and he was later to place great value on his own honorable birth.

It is reported that Samuel Clemens was a good husband and father. He seemed to have been warm and affectionate toward his wife and his children. Young John Marshall must have been aware of his father's love, especially on the morning in 1805 when his father left without kissing him good-by. Samuel Clemens left that morning to help a neighbor
in a house-raising, and in his hurry, he must have forgotten to kiss his oldest son. Unfortunately, he was never allowed to make the proper amends, as he was accidentally killed at the house-raising when a log fell on him and crushed him.

This small item of neglect on the part of Samuel Clemens had a telling impact on John Marshall. He was only seven years old, and the news of his father's death must have been traumatic for him.

Dixon Wecter says:

And, whether rightly or not, the modern psychologist will fancy in the lad's long-remembered slight from his father a key to the austerity with which he treated his own family, in whose circle no kiss was ever given or received save in the shadow of death.3

After his father's death, young John Marshall was forced to shoulder the responsibility of his family. Even though he was only seven years old, his serious nature allowed him no choice but to become the "man of the house." With his father's death John Marshall's childhood ended, a fact to note as this thesis will be dealing with another ended childhood brought on by the same circumstances when it gets into the life of Mark Twain.

The Clemens plantation had existed primarily on the income from the raising of tobacco. The agricultural theory

3Ibid., p. 9.
of plantation crop raising was to have enough land so that when one section gave out, another section could be utilized. Tobacco quickly wore out land, and the problem was that the Clemens plantation was not large enough to provide new land to work. Permilia Clemens soon found herself in rather bad circumstances and was forced to sell most of the slaves which her husband had left her.

A practical solution was reached in 1809. Simon Hancock, who had courted Permilia before her marriage, had some land in Kentucky and was living there, apparently doing rather well. He had heard of the Clemens's trouble, and in 1809 he wrote Permilia and offered to marry her. She accepted, sold what remained of her property in Virginia, and moved with her family to Kentucky, where she married Simon Hancock. John Marshall resented her marriage, resented Simon Hancock; and it is reported that after seeing his mother kiss her new husband in the fields, he was very upset, "though he did not know if the jealousy he suffered had been for himself or his dead father." John Marshall did not say anything to his mother, but his manner quickly revealed to her his resentment, and "she conformed to the pattern of behavior the boy expected of her."5

4Rachel Varble, Jane Clemens, the Story of Mark Twain's Mother (Garden City, New York, 1964), p. 95.

5Ibid.
John Marshall left the Hancock household when he was fourteen. He went to work in a factory, and, according to Dixon Wecter, "From the age of fourteen, in 1812, Marshall Clemens was evidently self supporting." Serious, quiet, John Marshall had probably not been overwhelmed by an affectionate Simon Hancock. His stay in the Hancock house had probably been tedious and tense.

But at least there had been a home, however unpleasant; not at fourteen, there was no longer a home for John Marshall, or the security of a family. The parental love that the boy so surely needed and wanted was totally absent. In reality, he had no childhood, no time to grow under the watchful eye of a loving parent. Dixon Wecter says that his serious nature through the later years—ambitious, industrious, austere, corroded by worry and haunted by the specter of poverty—was molded "during a boyhood that knew no time for play or humor, and had seemingly scant acquaintance with either affection or family security."7

From the age of fourteen until his marriage in 1823, there seems to be little information concerning John Marshall Clemens. It is known that he studied law during this period, but the amount of information which is available is small.

6Wecter, pp. 11-12.
7Ibid., p. 12.
In 1823 he met Jane Lampton, a charming young lady "who was a good dancer." Jane was a pert, lively young lady, and the serious John Marshall seemed to be immediately attracted to her. He courted her in the most honorable manner, and on May 6, 1823, in Adair County, Kentucky, they were married.

They settled in Adair County after their marriage, but in the spring of 1825, they started the first of their many migrations. John Marshall and his wife moved to Jackson County, Tennessee, and then in 1827, they moved again to Jamestown, Tennessee. In Jamestown John Marshall practiced law, became county commissioner, and was elected circuit-court clerk of the county and acting Attorney General.

While in Jamestown, which is in east Tennessee, John Marshall purchased seventy-five thousand acres of land which cost him ten cents an acre. Even at this low price, a great deal of money was required; but John Marshall had purchased the land in the belief that the financial security of his family was guaranteed, a false belief which was to follow him to his grave.

After the purchase of the land, money was scarce for the Clemens family, and eventually the proud, aristocratic John Marshall Clemens slipped to being a storekeeper. As Dixon Wecter puts it, "Having spent his cash in overexpansion, he found himself in the classic Southern plight of the landpoor."8

8Ibid., p. 32.
In the winter of 1334 John Marshall received a letter from his brother-in-law, John Quarles. The letter depicted wealth and promise in the town of Florida, Missouri; so, in the spring of 1335, John Marshall bundled up his family and set out for Missouri. They arrived in St. Louis, and planned to settle there, but a cholera epidemic sent them on their way.

They finally settled in Florida, Missouri, in the summer of 1335. Florida was a hamlet, eighty-five miles up the Salt River from the Mississippi. John Quarles owned a general store in Florida and was doing well. John Marshall went into partnership with Quarles. In a short time, in addition to running the store with Quarles, John Marshall was practicing law and serving as judge of the Monroe County Court.

John Quarles was a happy-go-lucky fellow, care free and friendly to his customers. It was natural that the personality of Quarles should conflict with that of John Marshall, so John Marshall left Quarles and opened up a store of his own. But here again his seriousness conflicted with the idea that a general store in Florida was to be a meeting place for loafers who could spit and whittle and expect drinks on the house.

In Florida, as Halley's Comet streaked across the sky one cold night, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, named after his
paternal grandfather and a family friend, was born. He was born on November 30, 1835, delivered by twenty-six-year-old Dr. Thomas Jefferson Chowning. This fourth child, delivered seven months from his conception, was about the only thing John Marshall Clemens had to show for his stay in Florida. "His future in Florida, like Florida itself, presaged failure." 9

John Marshall acquired some capital, and in 1839, purchased considerable land in and around Florida. He purchased the land that was to be the basis of the Salt River Navigation Project, a project before Congress which, if passed, was to provide for dredging and construction of locks on the Salt River, thereby making Florida accessible to the steamboat traffic of the Mississippi.

But the project was rejected by the Congress, and John Marshall was left with poor land in and around a poor community. On November 13, 1839, trying desperately to salvage himself, Clemens sold most of his valuable holdings in Monroe County to a Hannibal, Missouri, land speculator named Ira Stout for three thousand dollars. These holdings consisted of one hundred and sixty acres of farm land and the Clemens home tract on the north edge of Florida. A little later, John Marshall also sold Stout three hundred and twenty-six acres near the Ralls County Line for two thousand dollars. In

9Ibid., p. 50.
1843 this land was sold for four thousand dollars to appease John Marshall's creditors.

In mid-November, 1839, Clemens and his family moved to Hannibal, Missouri, situated on the banks of the Mississippi. He immediately bought two thousand dollars worth of stock on credit from St. Louis and opened a store. He mistakenly put his inept, fifteen-year-old son, Orion, behind the counter and tried to drum up some law business. Orion was unlike his father. He was a romantic youth who lacked a business-like mind; he was always willing to extend credit. Predictably, the store lost money.

Compounding his troubles, John Marshall lent his friend, Ira Stout, several thousand dollars. Stout took advantage of the new bankruptcy laws to avoid payment. Clemens had lost money in Florida, his store in Hannibal was losing money, he could find very little law practice, and Stout had cost him several thousand dollars. He now found himself in dire financial straits. As a matter of fact, the Clemens family struggled along in grinding poverty until John Marshall's death on March 24, 1847.

The aristocratic, proud John Marshall Clemens died a business failure, and his dream of wealth and power for his family went with him to the grave. For twenty years he had clung to the seventy-five thousand acres of land in east
Tennessee, struggling to pay the taxes on it, believing that he had insured the financial security of his family. As Mark Twain states in his Autobiography, "My father's dying charge was, 'Cling to the land and wait; let nothing beguile it away from you.'" Even in this dream, John Marshall was to be wrong. The Tennessee land proved to be worthless and was sold piece by piece to pay its taxes until at last it was gone. Mark Twain, in his later years, realized the futility of his father's dream and said of it:

Thus with the very kindest intentions in the world toward us he laid the heavy curse of prospective wealth upon our shoulders. He went to his grave in the full belief that he had done us a kindness. It was a woeful mistake but fortunately he never knew it.

John Marshall Clemens was a business failure. "And by the standards of the time . . . business failure was a sin." This was the Young America period, a time in American history which Mark Twain was to satirize in The Gilded Age. It was a time in which financial success was accepted as the blessing of God, failure as a sure sign of God's displeasure. These were the standards by which John Marshall Clemens was judged, and he himself must have been the most critical judge,

10 Twain, pp. 18-19.
11 Ibid., p. 22.
12 Wecter, p. 122.
for he was fully aware of them. He knew that a man of his aristocratic heritage was expected to succeed in business; yet he had failed again and again. He failed in Tennessee, in Florida, and in Hannibal.

Each of these failures must have been traumatic to him; each must have eaten away some part of him, essentially that part which governed his behavior toward those whom he loved. His acute awareness of his own inadequacies tormented his unswerving mind, allowing him no warmth or tenderness toward his wife or his children. A. B. Paine provided an adequate epitaph for John Marshall Clemens when he said "A dreamer and a moralist, an upright man honored by all, he had never been a financier. He ended his life with less than he had begun."13

John Marshall Clemens showed no affection toward any member of his family, even his wife. He is reported to have said to her shortly after their marriage, "It will be just as well if you don't take my arm, Jane... Don't cling to me without reason."14 He showed no emotion, and he expected no one to show any toward him. He once said to his wife, "The front gate is hardly the place to kiss a husband."15

13 A. B. Paine, Mark Twain, A Biography (New York, 1912), p. 73.
14 Varble, p. 95.  
15 Ibid.
Not only was he the model gentleman, the righteous, unsentimental pillar of sobriety in public; he was the same man inside his home. There was never any display of warmth or affection in the Clemens household. In his Autobiography, Mark Twain recalls this fact when he says:

In all my life to that time I had never seen one member of the Clemens family kiss another one—except once. When my father lay dying in our home in Hannibal he put his arm around my sister's neck and drew her down and kissed her, saying, 'Let me die!'

It is primarily this inability to show love with which this thesis is concerned, for there can be doubt that John Marshall's cold austerity had a profound effect upon his sensitive son Samuel.

Several influences seemed to have formed John Marshall's stern character. First, and probably most important, he did not have a childhood. From the age of seven he had to assume, in his own mind, the responsibility of an adult. He became "the man of the house," and this position very likely allowed no time for the freedom and happiness of childhood. Then his mother remarried, and he felt jealousy and resentment toward his step-father, Simon Hancock. The boy knew that he was not loved by his step-father. This lack of parental love, lack of family security, inevitably helped to mold him into a stern, cold, austere man.

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16 Twain, p. 99.
John Marshall left home at the age of fourteen. From that age on, even the tense family security found in the Hancock house was gone, and the awakening adolescent found himself alone in the world.

Another major influence which added to his coldness was financial failure. Lack of a childhood and of parental affection had produced the stern, unsmiling, austere adult; then his consecutive string of financial failures hardened him more. Each financial disaster added to the emotional wall which he built around himself, a wall which repeatedly proved to be impregnable to those who wanted so desperately to love and be loved by him.

John Marshall Clemens died on March 24, 1847, a broken man. All his life he had played to the hilt the part of the aristocratic, Virginia-born gentleman; and always lurking beneath the surface of this facade was the constant terror of dishonor brought on by business failure. John Marshall Clemens died as much more than a business failure. His austere personality caused him to be, at his death, not only a financial failure, but a failure as a man, a husband, and most important to this thesis, a father.
When Samuel Clemens was nearly four years old, his family moved to Hannibal, Missouri, a rising community on the Mississippi. It was not the rambling little village that many people have thought. In 1840 it had a population of 1034. It was noted for its cigar manufacturing and whiskey distillery. The rich, black prairie land around Hannibal funneled wheat, hemp, and tobacco to the bustling wharves along the Mississippi. A busy Market Street bisected the town. In 1844, the town boasted four general stores, three sawmills, two planing mills, three blacksmith shops, two hotels, three saloons, two churches, a tobacco factory, a hemp factory, and a flourishing distillery.

Along with its mercantile interests, Hannibal also had its cultural aspects. The Marion Female Academy was housed in the Christian Church. Reverend Daniel Emerson's English and Classical School held its sessions in the First Presbyterian Church. When Sam left Hannibal it had five newspapers, three bookstores, and a public library. By 1853, Hannibal had a population of three thousand and was the second city in the state.
The countryside surrounding Hannibal was much like that described in *Huck Finn* and *Tom Sawyer*. The supreme attraction was the "mighty Mississippi, rolling its mile wide tide along."

From the north came giant lumber rafts, and from the South came the glamorous steamboats. There was a large island two miles down the river from Hannibal, uninhabited and covered by a dense forest. This was to become Jackson's Island in Mark Twain's literature. Holliday's Hill (Cardiff Hill) was to the north of the town, and to the south were the Caves, huge limestone caverns which are familiar to readers of *Tom Sawyer*. The countryside around Hannibal provided ample material for an imaginative boy such as Sam Clemens.¹

Sam grew up in Hannibal. When he arrived there in 1839, he was by no means a healthy boy. He had been born two months prematurely, and his infancy was characterized by weakness. He required the constant attention of his mother. Dixon Wecter says, "A sickly infancy was succeeded by a puny childhood up through his seventh year."² As a child of four or five, he is reported to have had convulsions which his mother ascribed to worms. Biographers have pointed out that young Sam's sickliness endeared him to his mother beyond any of her other children.

¹Information in the preceding paragraphs is based upon Wecter, chapter V.
²Ibid., p. 80.
By the time Sam reached the age of seven, he was past his puniness. Physically, he was robust and healthy, but he was a nervous child, fitful, idle, erratic, and unpredictable. His nervousness was responsible for his somnambulism. As A. B. Paine says, "He walked in his sleep and was often found in the middle of the night, fretting with the cold, in some dark corner."³

Sam was an inquisitive child. Once he heard that a neighbor's children had the measles, and, being eager to catch the complaint, slipped over to the house and crept into bed with an infected playmate. He caught the measles and nearly died. The family was gathered around his bed awaiting the inevitability of his death, a scene which, he recalled in later years, gave him immense pleasure. He survived the measles, but not without the benefit of seeing his family sorrowed by his impending death.

The measles episode was only one of his close confrontations with death. Paine reports that "Mark Twain used to say that he had had nine narrow escapes from drowning..."⁴ Drowning was commonplace among the citizens of Hannibal, because of the close proximity of the Mississippi.

⁴Ibid., p. 12.
children early learned to swim, and Clemens was a good swimmer; but the river was tricky, and the lack of caution that inevitably accompanies childhood frequently led to exhaustion and muscle cramps. But Sam was a good swimmer. Once he swam two miles with leg cramps, using only his arms to keep himself above the water. It seems odd that he should have had so many near drownings.

The deliberate exposure to measles and the nine near drownings have led Charles Allen to believe that Clemens possessed a "death wish." Clemens was a nervous, emotional child, and the frequent encounters with death may have been a result of his psychological instability. But these encounters with death were perhaps not so much a part of a death wish (the actual desire to die) as an attempt to gain attention by nearly dying. The motivation behind these dramatic attempts to gain attention most probably was the inattention of John Marshall Clemens.

Sam started school in the spring of 1840. The town schoolmistress was matronly Mrs. Elizabeth Horr, who maintained discipline by thrashings. On Sam's first day of school, he broke a rule twice. After the second infraction, he was ordered to go get a switch. He went out and returned with

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a cooper's shaving. A classmate was then summoned, and he returned with a more suitable switch, and Sam was initiated into school properly.  

One of the brighter aspects of Sam's childhood in Hannibal was the yearly visits to John Quarles's farm, which was three and one half miles northwest of the old Clemens home in Florida. The visits to the farm began in the summer of 1840 and continued during the summer weeks of each year until 1847 or 1848.

At the Quarles farm were innumerable hounds to play with, horses to ride, cows, pigs, chickens, everything a young boy would need. The woods around the farm abounded in game, and hunting kept pheasant, wild turkey, and other delicious foods on the Quarles's table.

At the farm Sam probably began to realize the aloofness of his father, for he inevitably contrasted John Quarles's warm, hearty hospitality with John Clemens's cold, formal reserve; and the Quarles farm, with its openness and freedom, contrasted with the Clemens's tight little house in Hannibal. In these contrasts, John Clemens must have seemed a poor second to John Quarles.

In 1842, when Sam was seven, the family went to visit the farm. Jane Clemens and the other children set out on

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6 Wecter, p. 83. 7 Paine, p. 226.
Saturday morning. John Clemens and Sam remained behind. They were to start out the next day. On Sunday morning, John left for the farm but forgot Sam, who was still asleep. John rode all the way to the farm before the oversight was discovered. Jane's young uncle, Wharton Lampton, was sent back to Hannibal to fetch the boy. He found Sam at twilight crying in the kitchen. 8

Sam must have felt alone and frightened that morning as he awoke to an empty house. His father had deserted him, and the "effect of this 'desertion' upon Sam's relations with his father and later feelings about his father's inadequacy, through the years that the son nurtured its memory, can be surmised." 9

Edward Wagenknecht says, "Little sympathy existed at any time between Mark Twain and his father." 10 Sam Clemens was a sensitive boy, and between the ages of seven and twelve, he wanted his father's love and attention. But John Marshall did not give these to Sam, for he was occupied with his business failures, and he was, by nature, unaffectionate. Sam had tried all of the conventional methods of gaining his

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8 Wecter, p. 91.
9 Wecter, p. 92.
father's attention and had failed; therefore, he tried the unconventional methods of being a bad boy and catching the measles and nearly drowning, anything to get his father to look at him. As Allen says, "He is trying to obtain his father's approval by being a good boy. Failing, in desperation, he tries being a bad boy. All he can do is run the circle from goodness to badness." The bad boy behavior failed too, for John Marshall "detested the pert precocity of his son Sam. . . ."  

Young Sam had other terrors to make him emotionally unstable. Hannibal had many aspects of the frontier. Sam saw a man shot down on main street. The man was shot in the chest. He was carried into an office facing the street and laid on a couch. As he lay dying, someone placed a heavy family Bible on his chest, an incident which was later to be vividly re-created in *Huck Finn*. The man died with the Bible covering his wounds.  

Once two Ralls County farmers, Vincent Hudson and James McFarland, came to town drinking. They went to a hardware store and got into an argument over a plow. Sam was there as Hudson drew a Bowie knife, "a full eight inch blade," and stabbed McFarland in the chest. McFarland died a quarter of an hour later.

11 Allen, p. 19.  
12 Wecter, p. 67.
Another time Sam was present when two young men accosted their uncle on Market Street. One of the men held the uncle down while the other placed an Allen revolver to his head. The revolver repeatedly misfired, and the man was spared.

Missouri was a slave state, and Hannibal, being a productive river town, was the scene of much slave trade. Sam saw many gangs of slaves, chained and ready for shipment "down the river." Once he witnessed a murder by a "nigger trader." He saw the man beat a Negro with the butt of a whip until the Negro was dead.\(^{13}\)

Such terrible acts no doubt did affect the boy, but such events outside the home are less emotionally upsetting to a boy who is secure and loved in his home. Allen says, "Such outside experiences cannot in themselves account for the persistent nightmares, sleep-walkings, and courtings of death which plagued Twain's childhood."\(^{14}\) But Sam did not have full parental love at home. His mother loved him, but his father did not express the warmth and tenderness which the boy needed, and this rejection on the part of his father caused emotional damage that stayed with Sam all his life. As Allen says, "What can shake a child to the bones, rattle

\(^{13}\) These incidents are recounted in Wecter, Chapter 9.

\(^{14}\) Allen, p. 18.
his teeth and emotions for life, is the suspicion that he is unwanted, unloved."\(^{15}\)

Sam wanted to love his father, and John Marshall, with all of his austerity, did provide young Sam with an example. The older Clemens was highly respected in the community; people referred to him as Judge Clemens. He was an independent thinker whose opinion carried much weight. In religious matters, he was a "free thinker." He chose no absolute religious code, leaning rather toward agnosticism. Sam respected his father's intellectual independence, especially in the matter of religion, for in later life he was to maintain a personal religious doctrine which was quite similar to that held by his father. Sam respected his father's independence, his impeccable integrity, and his authority; but at the same time he hated his father's unyielding austerity. He simultaneously loved and hated his father, but "the element of hostility in Twain's double and conflicting feelings about his father was, however, far stronger than the element of love."\(^{16}\)

The damage done by John Marshall's austerity was not confined to Sam. The other children in the family also suffered. "At least three of the children (Sam, Henry, and Orion)
became nervous, anxious children—baffled and confused in their frustrated attempts to obtain his approval and love."  

When Sam was eleven years old, his father died. He had been campaigning for a County Clerk position, and in a severe March cold spell, while returning from the county seat, he contracted pneumonia and died two weeks later.

John Marshall's body was turned over to Dr. Merideth for a post mortem. Young Sam witnessed the post mortem through a key hole at Dr. Merideth's office. He recalls the incident in his Autobiography, saying that he had witnessed the embalming of an uncle, but records show that no uncle had died at that time. He saw two men at work on his father's body, but keyholes obstruct more than they reveal. Nevertheless, the boy's imagination was fired almost to the point of mental hazard. Rachel Varble reports that "that night he walked in his sleep and was not easily brought around."  

Dixon Wecter says:

Whatever macabre glimpses young Sam's gaze of fascination and horror may have caught as he peered through the keyhole of that death chamber . . . their effect can well be imagined upon this sensitive child, so long intimidated by the stern man upon whose corpse this last indignity had fallen.  

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17 Ibid., p. 18.  
18 Varble, p. 172.  
19 Wecter, p. 17.
Another important incident which centered around the death of John Marshall concerned the promise that Sam made over his father's coffin. As the coffin lay in the family parlor, Mrs. Clemens took Sam to it and made him promise to be a good boy. Minnie Brashear says, "By the side of his father's bier, Sam Clemens promised his mother that he would live to be like him, a faithful and industrious man, and upright." From his father Sam had learned the importance of a promise, which was a serious matter at any time; made under conditions like these it would be held sacred. "To a hypersensitive child such as Mark Twain was at eleven that ceremonious confrontation with his father's corpse must, in the first place, have brought a profound nervous shock." Van Wyck Brooks cites this solemn pledge, to obedience, conventionality, and adult responsibility, as the beginning of that "ordeal of Mark Twain" which clipped the wings of his free spirit. Brooks says, "He is to go forth the Good Boy by force majeure, he is to become such a man as his father would have approved of, he is to retrieve his father's failure. . . ."

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22 Ibid., p. 61.
His father's death brought many things to little Sam. The days of pirate and robber were ended. He could no longer roll boulders down Holliday's Hill with the Bowman boys. The Clemens family was in bad financial shape, and every member who was able had to work. Sam went to work as an errand boy for the Hannibal Gazette. At the age of eleven, Sam Clemens's childhood ended, officially. A. B. Paine has said that his childhood never ended until his death in 1910, but the promise to his mother did, no doubt, bring to the boy a certain amount of adult responsibility, and the fact that he did go to work demonstrates this responsibility. What the lack of childhood can do to a man has been demonstrated in the life of John Marshall Clemens. His lack of childhood helped to produce an austere, unaffectionate adult, and the effect of the same loss on the imaginative Sam must have produced mental anguish. This sudden loss helps to account for the idyllic quality with which Mark Twain treated childhood. His father's death ended Sam's childhood, and he never really forgave his father for dying.

Another product of John Marshall's death was guilt. Sam had not been the boy that his father wanted him to be. He had tried everything conceivable to gain his father's love, and thought he had failed. With the promise over his father's dead body, he realized his guilt, and the tragedy is that he
was to feel this guilt, in some form, for the rest of his life. When his brother Henry was killed in a steamboat explosion, he felt guilty. He had talked his brother into taking the steamboat, and he blamed himself for the tragedy which occurred. He took his own son for a sleighride one winter. The boy contracted pneumonia and died. He blamed himself for letting a blanket slip from the boy, and when the boy died, it was he who had caused it. These highly irrational guilt feelings first became perceptible with the death of John Clemens, and they were to plague Sam for a lifetime. John Marshall Clemens had not given his son love; instead, he had given him guilt.

Sam Clemens began his search for a father as soon as he was old enough to realize that he did not have one. As John Clemens was father by name, he seemed the most likely candidate. But try as he might, Sam could not find a father in John Clemens. The man was simply too austere and unemotional to give to his son the love and understanding which a good father must give.

Even when his father was alive, Sam was looking elsewhere. His accounts of the Quarles's farm and of John Quarles show that he might have found a father in that man. The warm, affectionate John Quarles, Jane Clemens's brother-in-law, was the kind of man Sam wanted as a father; and he
psychologically adopted him as his father, a welcome replacement for John Clemens.

In 1857, when he was twenty-two, Sam set out for the headwaters of the Amazon, but got sidetracked in New Orleans. He had come down the Mississippi on the steamer Paul Jones. One of the pilots on the steamer was Horace Bixby. Coming down, Sam developed a friendship with Bixby. While in New Orleans, Bixby agreed to teach the river to Sam, for a fee of five hundred dollars. The apprenticeship began, and Sam became a pilot, thanks to the stormy but efficient training of Horace Bixby. Their friendship was to last for fifty-three years, until Clemens's death in 1910. Though Bixby was a gruff, volatile man, he did show concern for Sam, more concern than was ever shown by John Clemens. In Horace Bixby, Sam found another father who was better than his real one.

Next in the succession of father figures for Sam was Jervis Langdon. Sam first became aware of Langdon's daughter, Olivia, in the summer of 1867. Courtship followed and the two were married February 2, 1870. Before the engagement, Jervis Langdon, a successful Buffalo, New York, businessman, asked Sam for references. Sam gave six prominent people in San Francisco. Each of the six sent letters to Langdon telling of the low character of Samuel Clemens. In his Autobiography, Mark Twain recalls how he was speechless when confronted
with all-too-frank letters of reference. Langdon asked Twain if he had any friends, and Twain replied, "Apparently not." With this Langdon said, "I'll be your friend, myself. Take the girl. I know you better than they do."  

After their marriage, Jervis Langdon gave Mark and Livy a house in Buffalo. It was an expensive house, equipped with servants, in an expensive neighborhood. Langdon was more than a father-in-law to Mark. He became a father, and Mark's respect and admiration for him is indicated when he says of him, "The business world knew J. Langdon, a name that was a power..."  

Mark Twain found another father figure in William Dean Howells, a literary critic, an intelligent, respected man. Mark Twain loved and respected Howells and relied heavily on his judgment throughout their relationship.  

Joseph Twichell was the final father to Mark Twain. It was Twichell who performed the ceremony when Mark and Livy were married, and it was Twichell who preached Mark's funeral. Mark describes Twichell when he says, "Twichell, with his big heart, his wide sympathies, and his limitless benignities and charities and generosities is the kind of person that

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23 Mark Twain, Autobiography, p. 111.  
24 Ibid., p. 135.
people of all ages and both sexes fly to for consolation and help in time of trouble." This description would definitely not fit John Marshall Clemens.

As Walter Blair states, "John Clemens had been a harsh father." The idyllic childhood days which Twain so aptly pictures in Tom Sawyer were but a figment of his imagination. The boy did swim in the Mississippi, and he did play pirate and robber in "regular style," but Sam Clemens's childhood was anything but idyllic. As he and his childhood friends such as Nate and Will Bowman rolled boulders down Holliday's Hill and raided Sunday School picnics, he was living in two different worlds. One was the world of fun and play, but the other was the cruel, hostile world of John Clemens. The attempts at fantasy were but a facade to cover the deep wounds brought on by the lack of paternal love. The emotionally sensitive Sam Clemens was well aware of the emotional vacuum in the Clemens household.

With this relation with his father, Sam repeatedly turned to his mother for love. The tender Jane Clemens was all too happy to give the boy the love that he wanted. Sam had been the weakest of the Clemens's children. He had

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25Ibid., p. 206.

26Walter Blair, Mark Twain and Huck Finn (Berkley and Los Angeles, 1960), p. 82.
constantly required her care and nursing as an infant, and she loved him above all her other children. Aware of rejection by his father, Sam tried to find in his mother both maternal and paternal love, which he so desperately wanted. The effect which Jane Clemens had on her son is attested by the description Mark Twain gives of her in his Autobiography: "She had a slender, small body but a large heart—a heart so large that everybody's grief and everybody's joys found welcome in it and hospitable accommodation."\(^{27}\)

The influence of Sam Clemens's father was negative; the influence of his mother was positive. As Gladys Bellamy put it, "Mark Twain, then, perhaps received from his mother an impetus toward patheticism and from his father an inclination toward pessimism."\(^{28}\)

\(^{27}\)Twain, p. 25.

\(^{28}\)Gladys Bellamy, *Mark Twain as a Literary Artist* (Norman, 1950), p. 70.
CHAPTER VII

FICTIONAL FATHERS AND SONS

All of Twain's fiction contains certain autobiographical aspects. In a letter to Miss Kate Staples, written October 8, 1886, Twain says, "Yes the truth is, my books are simply autobiographies." In the maze of autobiographical material in Twain's six major novels, the figure of John Clemens plays an important role. He serves as a model for many of the literary fathers that Twain created. The effect of John Clemens on Twain's literature is noticeable, for in the portrayal of such evil fathers as Pap Finn and King Henry VIII, Twain strikes back at the austere, unloving John Clemens. The mature Mark Twain probably realized the cruelty of his father, for he continually satirized him in his novels. Twain had experienced paternal rejection; this experience influenced his fiction.

Examination of the major novels of Mark Twain reveals that almost every father, from Squire Hawkins in The Gilded Age to Percy Driscoll in Pudd'nhead Wilson, has been either a weak, ineffectual man or a tyrannical, overpowering man;

1Wecter, p. 65.
but the significant fact is that none of these has been idealized as a man, and their qualities as fathers have left much to be desired.

In *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, the only father figure is the Yankee, Hank Morgan. He is not much of a father, nor much of a husband either. The aesthetic qualities of love, either wifely or parental, seem out of place in this man, for he is the Machine Man, interested only in the technical world which he has created.

Hank is a foreman in the Colt factory in Hartford. He says, "I became head superintendent; had a couple of thousand men under me." With this many rough men under him, he inevitably has some trouble, and one day he gets laid "out with a crusher alongside the head that made everything. crack..."

Hank Morgan is a practical man; a man full of fight. He recognizes the calculated realism of his position at the Colt factory (his position in the world for that matter), and he has no time for nor interest in aesthetics. Early in the novel he says of himself, "So I am a Yankee of the Yankees--

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3Ibid.
and practical; yes, and nearly barren of sentiment, I suppose—or poetry in other words."

He is barren of sentiment indeed, for when he marries Sandy, he does so with this explanation, "She was a flawless wife and mother; and yet I had married her for no particular reason. . . ." His marriage is one of social convenience, and his son is simply a by-product of his socially acceptable marriage. His casualness toward his wife implies his great lack of emotional involvement, and such treatment toward his wife would inevitably carry over to his son.

Hank Morgan is a father figure, yet examination reveals that he is a tyrant of a man. He is the technician personified, the bringer of mechanical miracles. But the miracles he brings destroy him in the end. He sets out to accomplish vast good for the people, but at the end of the book, he is the unfeeling destroyer of twenty-five thousand human beings. He sees the flaws in King Arthur's society, but he does not see the flaws in himself or in his machinery. In an afterword to the Yankee, Edmund Reiss says, "While extolling democracy and human equality, Hank sets himself up as The Boss, a dictator who wants not only to rule the land . . .

\[1\] Ibid.

\[5\] Ibid., p. 290.
but to be, in other words, a god. And Hank Morgan is not to be a god of love."

Twain did not create Hank Morgan as a mouthpiece for himself. He recognized the insensitive quality in his character, and he probably detested him for it. Reiss reports that when speaking of Hank Morgan with Dan Beard, the prospective illustrator of *Yankee*, Twain said, "You know, this Yankee of mine has neither the refinement nor weakness of a college education; he is a perfect ignoramus. . . ."7

Twain created in Hank Morgan a determined but essentially ineffectual character. Although Morgan has ability and confidence, he ultimately fails; and the fact that he is a father in the novel links him with John Clemens; for Clemens had ability and confidence, yet he too failed. Ignorance and insensitivity characterize both; and one may very well have been the model for the other.

In *The Gilded Age*, co-authored with Charles Dudley Warner in 1873, Twain presents two father characters, Squire Hawkins and Beriah Sellers. Although the work was written by both Twain and Warner, these two fathers bear a remarkable resemblance to John Clemens. The opening of the novel reveals

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6 Ibid., Edmund Reiss in Afterword, p. 324.

7 Ibid., p. 325.
that Squire Hawkins is a postmaster and runs a general store in Obedstown, Tennessee. John Clemens ran a small-town, general store for many years. Further resembling Clemens, Hawkins buys seventy-five thousand acres of land in east Tennessee, and Hawkins has the same fanatical dream about the land that Clemens had. In telling his wife of the purchase, he says, "Think of what an enormous fortune it will be some day! Why, Nancy, enormous don't express it—the word's too tame."  

Hawkins receives a letter from Beriah Sellers in Missouri in which Sellers tells Hawkins to come to Missouri and make his fortune. Hawkins is aware of his social superiority, and he feels that it is being wasted in Obedstown. He decides to go to Missouri saying to himself, "I believe I'll do it.—A man will just rot, here. My house, my yard, everything around me, in fact, shows that I am becoming one of these cattle..." Hawkins sells everything but the Tennessee Land and moves his family to a small, tumbled-down village in Missouri which resembles Florida in the 1830's.

In this village Hawkins "bought out the village store for a song and proceeded to reap the profits, which amounted

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9 Icid., p. 6.
to but little more than another song." Squire Hawkins feels that he is an aristocrat, but he fails in business, and he "always had a horror of debt." In all these details Squire Hawkins closely resembles John Clemens.

Hawkins goes into partnership with Beriah Sellers and manages to go through a series of moderate fortunes. At his death he is financially depleted. But the Tennessee Land has obsessed him; in it he sees a financial guarantee for his family. On his deathbed he says, "Never lose sight of the Tennessee Land! Be wary. There is wealth stored up for you there—wealth that is boundless." He dies, leaving his family in cruel poverty, but he clings to the hope of the Tennessee Land, and he leaves his family with the "cruel burden of prospective wealth." The similarity to John Marshall Clemens is striking.

Squire Hawkins is portrayed as a pathetic character; he is constantly trying to succeed in business, trying to live up to what is expected of him; but he fails. And the instrument that contributes most to his failure is the Tennessee Land. Hawkins, retreating from his failures, rallies around the land; he dreams of it, says to his wife,

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10 Ibid., p. 47.
11 Ibid., p. 63.
12 Ibid., p. 91.
"There's oceans and oceans of money in that land—mark my words."\textsuperscript{13}

But Hawkins's saving grace, the Tennessee Land, ultimately becomes a curse to his family. Offers are made for the land, but Hawkins's oldest son, Washington, repeatedly turns them down, holding out for a better price. Washington is infected by his father's dreams of glory and riches in the land.

Finally, at the end of the novel, Washington receives a letter from Obedstown, Tennessee. It is a bill for the current year's taxes on the seventy-five thousand acres of Tennessee Land belonging to the estate of Silas Hawkins. The money must be paid within sixty days or the land will be sold at public auction.

The bill is for one hundred and eighty dollars, "something more than twice the market value of the land, perhaps."\textsuperscript{14} Washington is torn between clinging to the land or letting it go, and then in a dramatic gesture, he tears the bill into pieces and says, "The spell is broken, the life-long curse is ended."\textsuperscript{15} When Washington commits this act, surrenders the land, he is at last free of the terrible wrong done him and his family by his father.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 42.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 308.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid.
Squire Hawkins is similar to John Marshall Clemens in his purchase of the land. Just as Clemens did, Hawkins places a fanatical and completely unrealistic value on the land, and the land proves to be a curse to his family, just as the Tennessee Land proved to be a curse to the Clemens family. Squire Hawkins and John Marshall Clemens are one and the same; and both men hurt their families.

The other significant father character in *The Gilded Age* is Beriah Sellers. He is a dreamer, a braggart, a liar, and a failure. He is constantly engaged in get-rich-quick schemes, but somehow, he always fails to reap any profits. As he talks of vintage wines being sent from European bankers, his family lives on turnips and water. Van Wyck Brooks says that Sellers "was so intoxicated with dreams of fortune that he had lost all sense of the distinction between reality and illusion. . . ."16

The crowning business failure of Sellers involves his participation in the Columbus River Slackwater Navigation Company, a company which plans to make the Columbus River navigable from the Mississippi to Stone's Landing. The entire operation depends upon a Congressional appropriation which somehow never materializes. Colonel Sellers fails miserably in this business venture, as did John Clemens in

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16Brooks, p. 62.
a like venture with the Salt River Navigation Project, which failed because of the absence of a Congressional appropriation. Twain describes the feelings of Sellers, and probably the feelings of John Clemens, when he says, "The fates had turned their backs on him at last, and all in a moment his air castles crumbled to ruins about him." 17

From the descriptions of Squire Hawkins and Beriah Sellers and their circumstances, it is most likely that John Clemens served as a direct model for both characters. They possess the financial idealism, the driving desire to succeed in business which Clemens possessed, and both characters fail just as he did. But more important to this thesis is the effect these two characters had on their families. Hawkins insists that he is insuring his children with the Tennessee Land, but in reality he is doing them a great damage. His son Washington realizes what his father has done when he speaks of the curse of the land.

I have chased it years and years as children chase butterflies. We might all have been prosperous now; we might all have been happy, all these heartbreaking years, if we had accepted our poverty at first and gone contentedly to work and built up our own weal by our own toil and sweat. . . . 18

18 Ibid., p. 306.
Beriah Sellers' dreams of fortune also severely damage his family. As he jumps from one speculation to another, he gives his family no type of security. He impoverishes his family, causes them untold moments of misery. His children dress in rags, and his wife lives in a constant state of embarrassment. His business failure is exceeded by his failure as a husband and father.

In *The Gilded Age*, Twain and Warner set out to satirize an age of bribery and wild speculation. This satire is obvious from the preface written by the authors:

> It will be seen that it (the novel) deals with an entirely ideal state of society; and the chief embarrassment of the writers in this realm of the imagination has been the want of illustrative examples. In a state where there is no fever of speculation, no inflamed desire for sudden wealth, where the poor are all simpleminded and contented, and the rich are all honest and generous, where society is in a condition of primitive purity, and politics is the occupation of only the capable and patriotic, there are necessarily no materials for such a history as we have constructed out of an ideal commonwealth.19

Granting that the overall purpose of the book was to satirize the materialistic society of the age, I believe that Twain goes a step further. Perhaps he is also satirizing his father for having been caught up in the fever of such a society. Both Squire Hawkins and Beriah Sellers are products of the Gilded Age, and since the two are so distinctly patterned

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after John Clemens, he must also have been, in the mind of Mark Twain, a pitiful product of the times. Although Twain's ridicule is directed toward an impure social and economic system, it probably centers on his own father, who was such an obvious pawn of that system.

In Pudd'nhead Wilson there are two father figures, Percy Driscoll and his brother Judge Driscoll. Percy is really the father, but when he dies early in the novel, his son, Thomas A. Becket Driscoll, is adopted by Judge Driscoll. Both characters serve as father to Tom, and both have a terrible effect on the boy.

In the third chapter the reader learns that Percy Driscoll is involved in land speculation. Twain describes Percy as "a prosperous man, with a good head for speculation. . . ." No doubt Percy was highly respected in Dawson's Landing, for in this age, a successful businessman was accorded respect. It is learned early that Percy's business keeps him away from his son. Tom's mother died at childbirth, and he is raised by a Negro mammy, Roxy. He has only his father as a parent, and in the third chapter, we learn that Roxy does most of the child rearing, for Percy goes away on one of his frequent business trips. He has invested in a land speculation, and "Within a few days the fate of the speculation

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20Mark Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson (New York, 1893), p. 4.
became so dubious that Mr. Percy went away with his brother 
the Judge to see what could be done with it . . . the men 
were gone seven weeks." For seven weeks Tom was left with-
out a father, probably just one of the many times that his 
father left.

Percy Driscoll is a busy man, with his prosperous land 
speculations and his business head, and the result is that 
he has little time for his son. But Percy fits the Twainian 
father pattern by another mold. He is a tyrannical man who 
has no sentiment or feelings. When he discovers a small 
thief in the house, he suspects some of the Negro servants. 
He calls them all to the parlor and threatens to send them 
"down the river," the most terrible of all fates for slaves, 
and the Negroes beg and plead for mercy. They all confess 
to the crime, and Percy graciously consents to sell them 
in town rather than "down the river." In the description 
of the Negroes' gratitude, Twain captures the true character 
of Percy Driscoll:

The culprits flung themselves prone, in an ecstasy 
of gratitude, and kissed his feet, declaring that 
they would never forget his goodness and never cease 
to pray for him as long as they lived. They were 
sincere, for like a god he had stretched forth his 
mighty hand and closed the gates of hell against them 
. . . he set the incident down in his diary, so that 
his son might read it, in after years, and thereby 
be moved to deeds of gentleness and humanity himself.22

21 Ibid., p. 18. 
The resemblance between Percy and John Clemens is carried a step further when it is learned that Percy dies a business failure. "Percy Driscoll had worn himself out in trying to save his great speculative landed estate, and had died without succeeding. He was hardly in his grave before the boom collapsed and left his hitherto envied young devil of an heir a pauper."\(^{23}\)

The other father figure in the novel is Judge Driscoll. The Judge and his wife have no children, and when Percy dies and they take Tom, they are happy. "Those childless people were glad to get him. Childless people are not difficult to please."\(^{24}\) Judge Driscoll is pleased to have a son, but he proves to be a bad father. He is a respected man in the community: "The chief citizen was York Leicester Driscoll, about forty years old, judge of the county court. He was proud of his old Virginian ancestry. . . ."\(^{25}\) But Judge Driscoll is so concerned with his inherited aristocracy that he is incapable of expressing emotion. "To be a gentleman—a gentleman without stain or blemish—was his only religion, and to it he was always faithful."\(^{26}\) This description of Driscoll could easily fit John Clemens, and the resemblance goes further when it is found that "the Judge was a free-

\(^{23}\)Ibid., p. 25. \(^{24}\)Ibid. 
\(^{25}\)Ibid., p. 3. \(^{26}\)Ibid., p. 3.
thinker." Henry Smith says, "Judge Driscoll in Pudd'nhead Wilson is J. M. Clemens."  

Tom is a problem child. As a baby he "would cry for nothing; he would burst into storms of devilish temper without notice." But most significant in his infant behavior was his desire for the tongs. "This was because his 'father' had forbidden him to have them lest he break windows and furniture with them."  

Tom's childhood is characterized by bad behavior, and he eventually becomes a thief and murderer. Tom's behavior pattern is established when he is a child. That this behavior pattern consists of repeated evil acts is understandable when one realizes that each act is committed to gain the attention of an unloving father. Tom is a desperate, lonely child, and by behaving badly, he can gain the attention of his father, Percy. Tom's method of gaining attention is established when he is a child, but

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27 Ibid., p. 4.
29 Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 19.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid., pp. 19-20.
even after his real father dies, and he is adopted by his uncle, he must resort to the same tactics, for his newly endowed father is no more affectionate than his real father.

Tom is a problem child, just as little Sam was a problem child. Sam was constantly trying to get attention from his unloving father. He was erratic in his behavior, mischievous and unpredictable. Just as Percy Driscoll and Judge Driscoll are modeled after John Clemens, so is Tom, as a nervous, insecure child, modeled after Sam.

Judge Driscoll is concerned with nothing but upholding the honor of the Driscoll name. When Tom is cuffed in public by Count Luigi, Tom has the Count arrested for assault. He tells his uncle of this, and the Judge demands that Tom challenge the Count to a duel. Tom hesitantly says that he prefers not to fight a duel with the Count because he is afraid of him. Old Judge Driscoll goes into a frenzy and says, "A coward in my family! A Driscoll a coward! Oh, what have I done to deserve this infamy."\(^{32}\) Rather than show any parental compassion for the boy who is full of fear, the Judge goes into a frenzy over the boy's cowardice and cuts him out of his will.

Tom needs a strong but compassionate father, and without one, he is forced to retreat from the house a branded

\(^{32}\text{Ibid., p. 74.}^{32}\)
coward, without any type of parental love or tenderness. He eventually murders Judge Driscoll. When Tom is robbing the Judge, who is asleep on the sofa near the money, he awakes and screams for help. "Without hesitation he (Tom) drove the knife home--and was free." As Judge Driscoll dies, Tom is free of the curse of his last unloving father. Frank Baldanze says, "And there is a symbolic justice in the murder of Judge Driscoll by his own supposed son..." Tom is killing an adopted father who never loved him, symbolic perhaps of Sam Clemens striking out against a father who never loved him.

The Prince and the Pauper is the first novel in which Twain steps out of his America and ventures into pre-Elizabethan England. He changes his style and picks up sixteenth-century dialogue. Twain leaves Missouri, but he does not leave the evil, unloving father. The two main characters of the novel are Tom Canty, fathered by the beastly John Canty, and Prince Edward, fathered by the cruel King Henry VIII.

The first mention of Tom Canty is that he was born "to a poor family of the name of Canty, who did not want him."35

33 Ibid., p. 118.

34 Frank Baldanze, Mark Twain, An Introduction and Interpretation (New York, 1961), p. 96.

35 Mark Twain, The Prince and the Pauper (Boston, 1882), p. 15.
Tom's family is described as a wretched group, stifled in the teeming poverty of the London slums. The first mention of his father is that "John Canty was a thief..."\textsuperscript{36} Tom is sent out to beg for money, and "when he came home empty handed at night, he knew his father would curse him and thrash him..."\textsuperscript{37}

John Canty is a tyrant. He is a completely unloving father, utterly sadistic in his treatment of his son. After Tom and the Prince change places, the Prince is walking the street late at night when the drunken John Canty, mistaking him for his own son, Tom, accosts him saying, "Out to this time of night again, and hast not brought a farthing home, I warrant me! If it be so, an' I do not break all the bones in thy lean body, then am I not John Canty, but some other."\textsuperscript{38}

Tom is a sensitive boy, and he is readily affected by his father. He attempts to escape from the cruel reality of a terrible father by listening to good Father Andrew's charming old tales and legends. "He often read the priest's old books and got him to explain and enlarge upon them. His dreamings and readings worked certain changes in him by and by."\textsuperscript{39} His reading and dreaming about princely life affects him so that he begins to act the prince. "Privately, after

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{37}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{38}Ibid., p. 29.
\item \textsuperscript{39}Ibid., p. 18.
\end{itemize}
awhile, Tom organized a royal court! He was the prince; his special comrades were guards, chamberlains, equerries, lords— and ladies-in-waiting, and the royal family. Tom Canty reads of princely ways and actually lives the part. Such behavior resembles that of Tom Sawyer, who has read all the romantic books. Tom Sawyer organizes Robin Hood's band and pirate crews, and he is always the leader. Both boys are imaginative and hypersensitive, and both suffer from the cruelty of unloving fathers. Tom Sawyer and his father will be brought out later in this thesis, but for the present, an analysis of the behavior of Tom Canty probably shows that he is using the "priest's old books" as a catalyst for his own imagination. As he withdraws into the splendored world of royalty and actually believes that he is a part of that world, he is escaping from his evil father, John Canty.

John Canty is a drunkard, a ruffian, a coward, and a murderer. He has no love for his son, nor for any other member of his family. Twain casts him as a monster, and that he is the father of one of the main characters seems to clarify Twain's position toward fathers. The novel has a "happy ending," and in accordance with this, Twain states in the dénouement that "Tom Canty's father was never heard of again."

\[40\] Ibid., p. 19. \[41\] Ibid., p. 203.
Another significant father in The Prince and the Pauper is King Henry VIII. Since Twain based this novel on historical fact, one can recall the terror invoked by Henry VIII. He is an absolute ruler, a cold-blooded politician who uses legalized murder to impose his will. Henry is so busy wielding his awesome power that he has little time to be a father to his son, Edward.

As the novel opens Henry is approaching death and is bedfast. Twain describes him as the "stern-countenanced invalid—the dread Henry VIII." He wishes to install his son as Prince of Wales, but to do so, he must obtain the approval of the Hereditary Great Marshall of England, whom Henry has imprisoned in the Tower. When informed that the Marshall is awaiting trial, Henry goes into a tirade, revealing his true character, which is that of a cruel dictator:

Peace! Insult not mine ears with his hated name. Is this man to live forever? Am I to be balked of my will? Is the prince to tarry uninstalled because, forsooth, the realm lack an earl marshal free of treasonable taint to invest him with his honors? No, by the splendor of God! Warn my Parliament to bring me Norfolk's doom before the sun rise again, else shall they answer for it grievously!43

The young Prince Edward is aware of his father's cruelty. After he and the pauper have met, he questions Tom about his

42 Ibid., p. 33.
43 Ibid., p. 36.
family. Tom tells him that his father beats him and is cruel to him. Edward answers, "Fathers be alike, mayhap. Mine hath not a doll's temper. He smiteth with a heavy hand. . . ." 

Tom and Prince Edward change places, and after awhile, the young prince is set adrift in the streets of London. He continually insists to everyone that he is Edward, Prince of Wales, but he is ridiculed and handled roughly. In one scene, the young prince is standing before a mob proclaiming his royalty. The mob laughs and jeers at him. In a fury of indignation he stands his ground against the people, and so insults them that they threaten to do him harm. As he stands before the threatening crowd, a stranger comes to his aid saying, "Though be prince or no prince, 'tis all one; thou be'st a gallant lad, and not friendless neither! Here stand I by thy side to prove it. . . ." This noble protector is Miles Hendon, a loyal, loving subject of Prince Edward, be he prince or not. Hendon fights off the mob and finally, "caught up the prince in his arms and was soon far away from danger and the multitude."  

Hendon and the prince are confronted by John Canty, who, believing the prince to be his own son, threatens to take the 

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44 Ibid., p. 24.  
46 Ibid., p. 66.
boy with him, by force if necessary. But Hendon says, "But whether this scurvy ruffian be thy father or not, 'tis all one; he shall not have thee to beat thee and abuse, according to his threat. . . ." With this he reaches for his sword, and the cowardly John Canty quickly disappears.

Miles Hendon becomes the protecting force over the seemingly mad young boy. He swears to himself that he will "care for him (Prince Edward) and watch over him; and whoso would shame him or do him hurt may order his shroud, for though I be burnt for it he shall need it." In one instance the prince is to be punished for his insolence by a law officer. He is to receive a half dozen lashes, but as he is being dragged to the whipping post, Miles Hendon cries, "Let the child go, ye heartless dogs, do ye not see how young and frail he is? Let him go; I will take his lashes."

Miles Hendon becomes more than a protector to Edward. Perhaps he becomes a father, a warm, tender father to a boy who has, in reality, never had one. Edward has been reared by servants who dress him and feed him and wash him, but who do not love him. His father has always been too concerned

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47 Ibid., p. 70.
48 Ibid., p. 71.
49 Ibid., p. 171.
with affairs of state to show any real love toward the boy, and suddenly a complete stranger takes him in and repeatedly shows love and tenderness toward him. Maybe Edward's taking to the streets of London was actually a search for a father, and in Miles Hendon he found one. Edward's fleeing his princely environment was more than an escape from the tiring pomp of royalty; it was an escape from the cruel Henry VIII. And Tom Canty's assumption of princeliness was also an escape from his father. In an afterword to the novel, Kenneth Lynn says, "The switch frees both boys from the supervision of tyrannical fathers (a recurrent fantasy in Mark Twain's fiction that undoubtedly reflects his own tortured relationship with John Marshall Clemens...."

There are two negative father figures and one positive father figure in The Prince and the Pauper. John Canty and Henry VIII are both tyrants, unloving and unaffectionate; whereas Miles Hendon is a warm, sincere human being who shows actual concern for the lonely Prince Edward. Perhaps John Canty and Henry VIII show what John Marshall Clemens was, and Miles Hendon shows the sort of father Sam Clemens wanted.

In The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Mark Twain is returning to a dream world of childhood along the mighty Mississippi.

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50Ibid., Kenneth Lynn, Afterword, p. 214.
In Tom Sawyer, Twain creates idyllic, happy boyhood personified. In the Preface to the novel, Twain says that "my plan has been to try to pleasantly remind adults of what they once were themselves. . . ."51

As Twain nostalgically returns to Hannibal (St. Petersburg in the novel), he is escaping from reality. He creates Tom Sawyer and says, "Most of the adventures recorded in this book really occurred; one or two were experiences of my own. . . ."52 Through the medium of Tom Sawyer, he goes back to his own childhood, a time filled with green lushness and happy days of pirate and robber. Mark Twain is Tom Sawyer. Richard Attick says, "For Mark Twain was, as has been said almost ad nauseam, Tom Sawyer in the flesh. . . ."53 Frank Baldanza has further said that "Tom represents Clemens's insatiable egotism, his love of fame, money, attention, and glory." Even as a sick, old man, Clemens walked the long way around to go through a hotel lobby where people would stare and whisper at his unusual clothes.54

51 Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (New York, 1875), Preface, p. i.
52 Ibid.
54 Baldanza, Mark Twain, p. 111.
The significant factor is that as Twain returns to his childhood through Tom Sawyer, he does so without the presence of John Marshall Clemens. Tom Sawyer is Mark Twain, and Tom has no father. When Twain returned to his childhood days in Hannibal, he could not bring himself to include the austere John Clemens. Tom is reared by loving Aunt Polly, his own mother's sister. At no place in the novel is there any mention of Tom's father. Tom has no father to mar his life, to reject him or not love him. Rather than give the boy an unloving father, as he himself had had, he gives him no father at all.

Yet Tom's behavior indicates that he is desperately searching for the love of someone. Tom is a complex character. He is simultaneously a selfish, unthinking "brat," and a warm, loving little boy. Charles Allen says that if "Tom were around today, he would be labeled a juvenile delinquent."55 His behavior is that of a good and bad boy. He is searching for approval and love, and when he fails to gain these from being a good boy, he turns to being a bad boy. He must gain the attention of someone. What Tom, Aunt Polly, and even Twain himself fail to realize is that Tom represents a lonely frustrated boy who is desperately attempting to gain someone's approval. Since Aunt Polly seems to give Tom a sufficient

55Allen, p. 19.
though somewhat fussy love, there is no plausible reason for his constant bid for her attention. There must be an unseen, unheard character to whom Tom is appealing. Charles Allen says, "I suspect that if the father of Tom Sawyer had appeared in fiction, Tom's rebellious good boy, bad boy behavior would be much more plausible and convincing."56

Tom Sawyer is Sam Clemens, and although Clemens deliberately created the boy with no father, there is no escaping the influence of John Marshall Clemens. Tom's rebellion may have been against Aunt Polly's overpowering goodness and her ardent Calvinism, but "it was probably more against John Marshall Clemens's unapproachable rigidity."57 As Mark Twain retreated to his childhood with Tom Sawyer, he could not entirely avoid the unloving John Clemens; for Tom Sawyer, even though his father does not exist, is obviously pleading for the love and affection of an unseen, unheard father, and little Tom's pathetic actions, motivated by loneliness and inattention, are, in reality, the same actions experienced by a lonely, frustrated Sam Clemens.

Any study of the works of Mark Twain should necessarily be climaxxed by *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, for it is in this novel that Twain reaches the ultimate of his creative genius. The effect of this one work on American literature

56Ibid. 57Ibid.
has been tremendous, causing Ernest Hemingway to say, "All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn."\(^{58}\)

There are three significant father figures in Huck Finn, Pap Finn, Nigger Jim, and Colonel Grangerford. The first, Pap Finn, must qualify as one of the greatest fictitious father figures in American literature. The first mention of Pap Finn comes in Chapter I when Ben Rogers says of Huck's father, "Yes, he's got a father, but you can't never find him these days. He used to lay drunk with the hogs in the tanyard..."\(^{59}\) Pap is immediately equated with the animalism of the tanyard, and he is to keep this quality during his brief appearance in the novel.

Huck is being raised in respectability by the Widow Douglas, but one night when he returns to his room at her house he is confronted by Pap. The sordid animalism of Pap is documented in the physical description of him.

He was most fifty, and he looked it. His hair was long and tangled and greasy, and hung down, and you could see his eyes shining through like he was behind vines. It was all black, no gray; so was his long, mixed-up whiskers. There warn't no color in his face, where his face showed; it was white.

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\(^{59}\)Ibid., p. 17.
Pap has heard that his son, Huck, has come into some money, and he wants some or all of it. He hounds Widow Douglas and Judge Thatcher, who has control of Huck's money. Huck occasionally borrows two or three dollars from Judge Thatcher and gives the money to Pap. "Every time he got money he got drunk; and every time he got drunk he raised Cain around town; and every time he raised Cain he got jailed. He was just suited--this kind of thing was right in his line."\(^6\)

Huck does not love his father. He says, "Pap hadn't been seen for more than a year, and that was comfortable for me; I didn't want to see him no more."\(^6\) Huck has never had a normal father-son relationship with his father, mainly because of the beastly qualities of his father.

Pap realizes that he is not going to get any of Huck's money by legal methods, so one night he kidnaps him. He takes Huck across the Mississippi to a cabin deep in the forest on the Illinois shore where he literally keeps his son a prisoner. Huck says, "But by and by pap got too handy

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\(^6\)Ibid., p. 27.
\(^6\)Ibid., pp. 31-32.
\(^6\)Ibid., p. 21.
with his hick'ry, and I couldn't stand it. I was all over with welts. He got to going away so much, too, and locking me in. Once he locked me in and was gone three days. It was dreadful lonesome."

Finally Huck can take it no longer. While his father is gone, he saws his way out of the cabin, takes what provisions he can, and plans his escape. Before he leaves, he shoots a wild pig, takes it to the cabin, and "hacked into his throat with the ax. . . ." Kenneth Lynn says that "Huck's slaughter of the pig not only symbolizes his desire to end his own miserable life, but to slay his father and the sordid animality of his ways."

Huck takes to the river and flees to Jackson's Island. In Tom Sawyer Huck, Tom, and Joe Harper ran away to Jackson's Island. Tom and Joe fled to the island to escape the cramped life of respectability, and Huck had joined them for no particular reason; but this time Huck is running away for a very good reason. He must escape from the tyrannical, sadistic Pap Finn; he is running from an unloving father.

When Pap is presented in all of his wretched depravity, he is, in the mind of Mark Twain, a grotesque symbol of John

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63 Ibid., p. 32.  
64 Ibid., p. 41.  
65 Kenneth Lynn, Mark Twain and Southwestern Humor (Boston and Toronto, 1959), p. 211.
Marshall Clemens. Maybe in creating the character of Pap Finn, Twain delved into his own subconscious mind to dig up distorted examples of his own feeling toward his father, and it was in remembering his torturous relationship with his own father that he could create such a cruel, unfeeling father as Pap Finn. Kenneth Lynn says, "And Huck's outlaw Pap is a nightmare version of Twain's hardhearted father."\(^6^6\)

One of the other major father figures in _Huck Finn_ is Colonel Grangerford. As Huck and Jim are going down the river, a steamboat runs down their raft, and they are separated. Huck makes his way to shore and is taken into the Grangerford home. "Col. Grangerford was a gentleman, you see. He was a gentleman all over . . . He was well born. . . ."\(^6^7\) Colonel Grangerford is a Southern aristocrat, a tall quiet, dignified man. Huck describes him:

There warn’t no frivolishness about him, not a bit, and he warn’t ever loud . . . but when he straightened himself up like a liberty-pole, and the lightening begun to flicker out from under his eyebrows, you wanted to climb a tree first, and find out what the matter was afterwards. He didn’t have to tell anybody to mind their manners—everybody was always good-mannered where he was.\(^6^8\)


\(^6^7\)Twain, _Huck Finn_, p. 108.

\(^6^8\)Ibid.
Colonel Grangerford has three sons and two daughters, and from the description of the man, he probably shows little parental love and tenderness. All of his children must be afraid of him just as Huck is. The honor and austerity of Colonel Grangerford seem to link him with John Marshall Clemens. Walter Blair recognizes the similarity between the two when he says, "Colonel Grangerford is pointed out as often wearing a blue swallow-tail coat with brass buttons. John Clemens often wore a coat like this."\(^{69}\)

The Grangerfords and the Shepherdsons are engaged in a feud which has been going on for thirty years, and each family has suffered casualties. As has been the case before, Twain tends to discredit his father figures, and the fact that he shows the honorable, dignified Colonel Grangerford engaged in a senseless, brutal feud shows discredit to him. Concerning the feud, Frank Baldanza says, "This is a society in which high civilization only fitfully shines through the brutality and crudity of a raw living arrangement."\(^{70}\) Although Colonel Grangerford seems to be an aristocratic gentleman, possessed of wisdom and common sense, Twain savagely satirizes him for becoming a product of a social code which not only tolerates, but encourages murder. John Clemens

\(^{69}\)Blair, p. 215. \(^{70}\)Baldanza, *Mark Twain*, p. 115.
was not involved in any feuds, but he was greatly influenced by the social code which influenced Colonel Grangerford.

In Twain's major novels studied so far, all of the fathers, with the exception of Miles Hendon, who was actually not a father at all, have been portrayed as evil, tyrannical men or as weak, ineffectual men. But in *Huck Finn*, Twain creates his only positive father character in Nigger Jim. Jim has a family, a wife and two children. That Jim loves and misses his family seems odd to Huck, since Jim is a Negro slave, and he says, "I do believe he cared just as much for his people as white folks does for their'n. It don't seem natural, but I reckon it's so." 71

Although he is a Negro slave, Jim shows a warmth and tenderness toward his children that amazes Huck. In relating to Huck the incident by which he discovered his daughter's deafness, Jim shows true fatherly love. He had told his daughter to shut the door, and she had not done it; he had become infuriated at her and had slapped her. Then the door had blown shut, and the child had not flinched when the door slammed. Then Jim had realized that she was deaf, and he tells Huck, "Oh, Huck, I bust out a-cryin' en grab her up in my arms, en say, 'Oh, de po' little thing! De Lord God

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71 Twain, *Huck Finn*, p. 155.
Amighty forgive po' ole Jim, kaze he never gwyn to forgive hisself as long's he live!'"^{72}

Jim thinks so much of his family that he decides to go to a free state where he will work and save every penny in order to buy the two children, and "if their masters wouldn't sell them, they'd get an Abolitionist to go and steal them."^{73} Huck says, "It most froze me to hear such talk."^{74} But Jim's saying these terrible words demonstrates the powerful love he has for his children. He is willing to commit a crime to have his children with him. His love for them greatly exceeds his respect for the social code which governs his environment. Unlike John Clemens, Jim places the love for his children above what society expects of him.

Huck first encounters Jim on Jackson's Island. The two immediately share a distinction, for both are fugitives. Jim has run off because he believes that Miss Watson is going to sell him down the river. Jim is running from slavery. Huck, on the other hand, is also running, running away from the savage cruelty of his father. Here on Jackson's Island a metamorphosis takes place. Jim possesses the capacity to

^{72}Ibid., p. 156.
^{73}Ibid., pp. 92-93.
^{74}Ibid., p. 93.
love, to protect; Huck is searching for love and protection. Jim has all the qualities of a loving father, as demonstrated in his feelings about his own children; and Huck, oddly enough, has the qualities of a son. Huck has realized not only the immense cruelty of his father, but the absolute rejection of his father, and his running away is simultaneously an escape from Pap and the beginning of a search for another father, one who will love him with the warmth and tenderness so lacking in his actual father.

Almost immediately Jim begins to demonstrate his paternal qualifications. Huck makes them a camp in the woods, but Jim, sensing that it is going to rain, moves the camp to a cave above the woods. Inevitably, a rain storm comes, and Jim says to Huck, "Well, you wouldn't a ben here 'f it hadn't ben for Jim. You'd 'a' ben down dah in de woods widout any dinner, an gittin' mos' drowned, too; dat you would, honey." 75

As Huck and Jim start down the river on a raft, their relationship becomes more and more solidified. One night they encounter fog. Huck takes the canoe and goes to tie the raft to a sapling, but the raft tears loose and goes down the river, leaving Huck alone in the canoe. Huck

75Ibid., p. 57.
"whoops" and tries to find Jim and the raft in the dense fog, but to no avail. Finally Huck makes his way back to the raft and climbs aboard. Jim is sleeping, and Huck thinks of a marvelous trick to pull on Jim. He pretends that he has been asleep and wakes Jim. When Jim sees that Huck is alive, he says:

Goodness gracious, is that you, Huck? En you ain' dead—-you ain' drowned--you's back ag'in? It's too good for true, honey! It's too good for true. Lemme look at you chile, lemme feel o' you. No, you ain' dead! You's back ag'in, 'live en soun', jis de same ole Huck--de same ole Huck, thanks to goodness!76

But Huck, in cruel Tom Sawyer fashion, tells Jim that he has never been gone, that Jim just dreamed it all. Jim can't believe it; it had all seemed so real to him. But then he discovers trash on the raft and realizes it was no dream and that Huck is lying to him. Jim eloquently says:

En when I wake up en find you back ag'in,'all safe en soun', de tears come, en I could 'a' got down on my knees en kiss you' foot, I's so thankful. En all you wuz thinkin' 'bout wuz how you could make a fool uv ole Jim wid a lie. Dat truck dah is trash; en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head er dey fren's en makes 'em ashamed.77

It is with this speech that Huck realizes the tender humanity in Jim, and he is ashamed of the cruel trick he has

76Ibid., p. 83.
77Ibid., p. 90.
played on him. Huck, so long a fatherless creature, has found a father at last, a father who is deeply concerned about him; and in an act of complete reverence, symbolic of Huck's at last accepting the crude Negro slave as a father, he says, "It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger; but I done it, and I warn't never sorry for it afterward, neither."78

Huck finds a father in Jim. As the two float down the Mississippi, sharing the close quarters of a nine-foot raft, they develop a strong and lasting love. The long trip reveals more and more to Huck, causing him to see the strong fatherly qualities in Jim. Huck says of Jim, "He was most always right; he had an uncommon level head for a nigger."79 When hearing of Jim's love for his children, Huck comments, "He was a mighty good nigger, Jim was."80

Huck's love for Jim climaxes in Chapter XXXI. The Duke and the King plan to sell Jim back into slavery. Huck is at a loss as to what to do. His love for Jim conflicts with his social conscience. He believes that in order to do the right thing, he must tell the truth about Jim. So, in order to

78 Ibid.
79 Ibid., p. 81.
80 Ibid., p. 155.
appease his conventional conscience, he writes a letter to Miss Watson, telling her where Jim is. At once he "felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time."^31 But the feeling does not last. He begins to remember how good Jim has been to him, how Jim used to let him sleep through his watch on the raft; and again he is torn between doing the "right" thing, which involves sacrificing Jim to slavery, or doing the "wrong" thing and letting his love for Jim become the guiding factor. In the climactic scene, Huck looks at the letter and says, "All right, then, I'll go to hell--and tore it up."^32 With these terrible words Huck achieves true salvation, and in damning himself, expresses his immense love for Jim. Jim, at this point, becomes Huck's true father, and Huck would rather go to hell than harm his father.

In order for Huck to accept him as a father, he must see that Jim qualifies as a father. Though Huck is only a boy, his experiences have forced him into a sort of pseudo-manhood. And for any man to become his father, that man must possess qualities of manhood and fatherhood. Frank Baldanza says that Huck "realizes in the long run Jim's goodness, his

^31 Ibid., p. 209.
naive but firm affection, his love for his family, and his willingness to sacrifice sleep and safety for Huck make him essentially a better man than Huck." When Huck realizes the superiority of Jim, he is more than willing to accept him as a father.

The irony of Huck's finding a father in Jim, who is a Negro slave, seems to be a reflection upon John Marshall Clemens. George P. Elliott says that "Huck is at the very bottom of the social scale, but Jim, being a slave, is below the bottom, isn't even on the scale..." Twain created an immensely warm and affectionate father figure in a man who comes from the lowest stratum of society; and yet he had in his own father, John Clemens, a member of a higher stratum of the social scale. Clemens was Virginian born, an aristocrat, proud and respected by his social peers, and the fact that Twain could create such an affectionate father as Jim, who was a Negro slave, seems to emphasize the terrible cruelty of the unloving John Clemens, who was a gentleman, but little else.

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83Balanzza, Mark Twain, p. 117.
84Twain, Huck Finn, George P. Elliott in Afterword, p. 263.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

John Marshall Clemens was an austere, unaffectionate person. He was a gentleman, an arrogant aristocrat. He was unemotional and unloving because of two factors. He had never had a proper childhood. He was put on his own at the age of fourteen, and never allowed the happiness and freedom of being a child. He was also a business failure, in a time when business failure was a sin.

He died as a failure, leaving his family in grinding poverty; but he thought that he had insured his family with seventy-five thousand acres of Tennessee land. The land had become an obsession with him, and his dying plea was for the family to cling to it. This land proved to be a curse to the family, and John Marshall Clemens's last hope proved to be a failure.

Sam Clemens was a hypersensitive boy, nervous, erratic, and unpredictable. He suffered from nightmares and sleepwalking. This emotional instability was a result of John Clemens's austerity. Sam had a strained, unhealthy relationship with his father. He desperately wanted his father's
love and attention, but his father never gave these to him.

Sam was a problem child, mischievous and troublesome. He alternated between being a good boy and a bad boy. He tried to get his father's love and attention by being a model child, and when this method failed, he tried being a bad boy. He ran the circle from good to bad in an attempt to gain his father's approval, but all methods failed. He nearly drowned nine times, and he almost died from a deliberate exposure to measles. Even these confrontations with death were attempts to get the attention of John Clemens.

Sam had conflicting feelings about his father. He respected his father's honor and integrity, and admired his intellectual independence. But at the same time, he disapproved of his father's austerity and lack of affection. In this ambivalence, hatred became the dominant emotion rather than love.

John Marshall Clemens's influence on his son was primarily negative. From his father Sam received his lifelong tendency toward pessimism. John Clemens was a "free thinker" on religious matters, and Sam inherited this agnosticism from his father. John Clemens did not give his son love, but he did give him guilt, which Frank Baldanza calls "a form
of fear about interior forces within the individual which he
does not understand."¹

John Marshall Clemens never gave his son the love and
affection which the boy so desperately wanted and needed.
Sam was a lonely, frustrated boy in his attempts to gain the
love and attention of an austere, unloving father. Sam's
realization of his paternal rejection caused him to embark
at an early age on a search for the kind of father he wanted,
and this search continued throughout his life. He found
substitute fathers in John Quarles, Horace Sixby, Jervis
Langdon, William Dean Howells, and Joe Twichell. All of
these men served as welcome replacements for the stern John
Marshall Clemens.

This thesis is mainly concerned with the effect that
John Marshall Clemens had on Mark Twain the writer. The
influence of parents cannot be denied nor ignored, and this
influence is likely to be important in explaining a writer
and his art. Preceding chapters have identified the type
of fictitious fathers that Twain created in his literature.
Essentially, Twain satirizes his fictitious father figures.
With the exception of Nigger Jim, all of the father figures
in the six novels studied are portrayed as inadequate. This

¹Baldanza, p. 107.
inadequacy takes three distinctive forms. There is the weak, ineffectual father, characterized by Squire Hawkins and Colonel Sellers; there is the aristocratic gentleman-tyrant, characterized by Hank Morgan, Henry VIII, Percy Driscoll, and Colonel Grangerford; and there is the drunken, ruffian sadist, characterized by Pap Finn and John Canty.

One factor links all of these fathers together. They are all cruel to their sons. Each of these fathers does not give love and affection to his son. They are all so busy with trying to wield power or amass fortunes or get something for nothing that they pitifully neglect, and sometimes cruelly mistreat, their sons.

Each of these fathers was to some extent modeled after John Marshall Clemens. Mark Twain never got over his father's rejection, and he never forgave his father for not loving him; in creating such evil, unloving fathers as he did, he was striking back against a father who had never loved him.

Twain is not content in merely striking back at his father by creating such evil fictitious fathers. With the exception of Beriah Sellers, every paternal figure in his six major novels either dies or disappears, a just reward for their evil. By doing away with these characters, Twain is symbolically killing his own father. John Marshall Clemens
must certainly have served as the model for each of the inadequately father figures that Twain created, and by killing each of them in his fiction, Twain is ultimately punishing his father for not giving him love.

In the creation of two characters, Twain portrays the kind of father that he always wanted. Nigger Jim becomes a warm, tender father to Huck Finn. Miles Hendon symbolically becomes the father of Prince Edward. In both cases, the two boys are running away from unloving fathers. They are searching for paternal love and understanding, just as Twain did all his life. These two boys find foster fathers who provide warmth and tenderness that was so noticeably absent in their real fathers.

In the six major novels the sons all share a common malady. They are not loved by their fathers, and they are all lonely, frustrated boys searching for love and attention. Their behavior is always motivated by the lack of paternal love. Tom Driscoll becomes a thief and a murderer, mainly because of his frustration at not finding love in his two fathers. Tom Canty and Prince Edward trade their identities to escape cruel fathers. Huck Finn flees from his grotesque father.

The cruel-father-lonely-son pattern appears again and again in Twain's fiction, indicating that it is a significant
factor in explaining his art. Bernard De Voto says, "The reappearance in . . . novels of the same constellation of anxiety, the same kind of relationship between characters . . . would indicate that it expressed a constant need of the novelist."\(^2\)

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