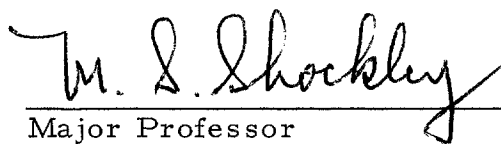


REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MOTHER-SON RELATIONS
IN THE MAJOR NOVELS OF SAMUEL CLEMENS

APPROVED:


Major Professor


Minor Professor


Director of the Department of English


Dean of the Graduate School

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MOTHER-SON RELATIONS
IN THE MAJOR NOVELS OF SAMUEL CLEMENS

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Janie Rogers, B. A.

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CHAPTER I

JANE CLEMENS, 1803-1835

Jane Lampton, the mother of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, was born in Adair County, Kentucky, probably in the log cabin which her father built for his young wife.¹ Jane, who was always energetic and vivacious, was descended from a long line of sturdy pioneers.

Jane's maternal grandmother, Jane Montgomery Casey, had been through many bloody Indian raids. She and her family had moved from Virginia to Kentucky in 1779 and built four log cabins on the headwaters of Green River, only twelve miles from Logan's Fort, which had been built by Benjamin Logan, Jane's brother-in-law. Soon after the snows melted, Indians attacked the Montgomery cabins, and Jane's father William and a Negro boy were killed. As the young colored boy was shot, he fell backward and his head pushed the cabin door open:

Jane, the daughter, then a young woman. . . sprang to the door, pushed out the negro's head, shut the door and called for her brother Thomas' gun. Betsey, her sister, about twelve years of age, clambered out at the chimney, which was not higher than a man's head, and took the path to Pettit's station, distant about two and a half miles. An Indian pursued her for some distance, but being quite

¹ Dixon Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal (Boston, 1952), p. 23.

active, she was too fleet for him, and reached the station in safety. From Pettit's a messenger was immediately dispatched to Logan's fort.

From some cause or other, probably the call of Jane for her brother's rifle, which was doubtless overheard by the Indians, they did not attempt to break into the cabin.²

The Indians did, however, attack Jane's brother's cabin, killing John, her brother, and capturing his wife and children. After help arrived from Logan's fort and after much bloodshed, the captives were returned to their homes. Orion Clemens, Jane's great-grandson and Samuel's elder brother, later wrote of Jane Montgomery Casey, "Though a good Baptist she never could, while she lived, endure the presence of Indians, because by savages five of her relatives were killed."³

According to Wecter, soon after the spring of 1781, William Casey, "a buckskin rifleman of Logan's Fort and son of a Virginia captain in the Continental Army," asked Jane Montgomery to marry him, whereupon she accepted. "William was a stalwart young hunter, with sharp black eyes and long black hair, already famous for his courage."⁴ Until about 1790, Jane and William lived at Casey's Station on the Hanging Fork of Dick's River, not far from Logan's Fort in Lincoln County; at the end of nine years, they, along with some other settlers, moved to unsettled country fifty miles from any white

²Ibid., p. 20.

³Ibid., p. 21.

⁴Ibid.

settlement in what became Green, and later Adair, County.⁵ According to Wecter, Casey built a house and stockade on Russell's Creek, which is near present-day Columbia. He also took command of the militia and won the reputation of "chief protector against the Indians, whose forays still made Kentucky a Dark and Bloody Ground."⁶ Colonel Casey was a civic-minded man who employed a tutor for the children in the early Kentucky settlements and aided in establishing academies in Green and Adair counties.⁷ "In 1795, he served in the State House as Representative from Green County; in 1799, he was a member of Kentucky's second Constitutional Convention, and beginning in 1800, sat in the State Senate."⁸ He was founding father for Greensburg and the village of Columbia, both of which were county seats. In 1806, a new county between Adair and Lincoln was christened Casey in his honor.⁹

Since Jane was in close contact with her grandparents, she was influenced by what they believed and said. By living near them, and even with them for a while, Jane was made to realize the importance of being a strong woman in times of distress. Jane's grandmother, for whom she was named, had withstood the strain and pressure of a pioneer society. Jane must surely have been told of her grandmother Casey's fighting the Indians and how Jane should strive to be like her.

⁵Ibid., pp. 21-22.

⁶Ibid., p. 22.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

The fact that her grandfather Casey was a prominent settler must also have left its mark on Jane. Since education was important to her grandfather, Jane was brought in contact with the theory that one should attend school and learn as much as possible. Her grandfather's social obligations also gave Jane an opportunity to learn social poise. Thus, Jane had the moral, social, and educational environment which would enable her to guide her own son and direct his interests toward worthy ambitions.

Jane Lampton's parents were second generation pioneers. They did not have the problem of coping with Indians; they did, however, have to face the problems of financial failure and the ever-present failure of crops. According to Wecter, Jane's mother Peggy married Benjamin Lampton in March, 1801. Lampton was thirty years of age and considered to be "sociable and a good singer." His father William had traveled from England to Virginia in the early 1740's and had become a landowner in the northern area of the Piedmont. William Lampton had married Patsy Schooler in 1763, in Page County, Virginia, and they had moved to Kentucky when Benjamin was a small boy.¹⁰

Like his father-in-law, Benjamin was a farmer with an interest in civic affairs. "He organized and captained a militia company and supervised road building in Adair County, meanwhile extending the

¹⁰ Ibid.

property he already owned by the purchase of one hundred and forty acres on Russell's Creek, adjoining the home property of his wife's parents, the Caseys, four miles west of Columbia."¹¹

Lampton was not a typical pioneer, although he tried to be. One of his ancestors had come from England's County Durham to Virginia to buy a little plantation; in order to come to America, this ancestor had to forego the inheritance of Lambton Castle.¹² It was at the time when he came to America that his name was misspelled, and the b in Lambton was replaced with a p. His abnegation appeared the greater now because vast collieries had since been opened on Lambton land, and the lucky incumbent had got an earldom.¹³ In this respect, Benjamin Lampton was not an ordinary pioneer; few pioneers had ancestors of nobility.

Benjamin seldom referred to his noble ancestor, although he still retained some English ways which were irritating to Jane's relatives:

At the Christmas season he preferred carols to fireworks, and he would ride miles to find holly and mistletoe to decorate the house. He thought foxes should be trailed on horseback in

¹¹ Ibid., p. 23.

¹² Charles Neider, The Autobiography of Mark Twain (New York, 1959), pp. 30-31.

¹³ Ibid., p. 31.

the orthodox manner, hounds to the fore for the kill. (As Thomas Montgomery once said to his sister, "I doubt if your son-in-law would shoot a dam' red fox in Colonel Casey's own chicken yard.") In the matter of clothes, Lampton wanted a ruffle too many on his shirts and doted on silk neckwear.¹⁴

Another fault Peggy's Uncle Montgomery found with Benjamin had nothing to do with his English ways. This fault was "his inability to make money and his cavalier attitude toward that failing."¹⁵ Benjamin often joked about his poor credit, although Colonel Casey, his father-in-law, was the only one to find it funny.

Jane faced the problem of financial failure through all of her early life. Benjamin, Jane's father, experienced one business failure after another. When Jane married John Marshall Clemens, she probably assumed that she was marrying a man who would someday be wealthy since he was a lawyer. However, John Marshall resembled her father as a businessman. He could never invest his money in a stable enterprise; somehow, John Marshall was always left with all the debts to repay. Because she was accustomed to swallowing her pride, Jane was therefore able to live through poverty and hardship without antagonizing her husband about his financial failures. In later years, this kind of tolerance would be seen in Samuel Clemens; yet possibly his fear of being poor caused him to strive for wealth.

¹⁴Rachel M. Varble, Jane Clemens, The Story of Mark Twain's Mother (New York, 1964), p. 3.

¹⁵
Ibid.

Jane's mother, Peggy Lampton, was a delicate woman. During the summer and autumn after Jane's birth, Peggy remained lackadaisical, not handling her baby unless feeding her. Peggy gave birth to a second child, also a girl, four years later; Patsy, as the child was called, was to be Jane's constant companion and friend during the time of their mother's illness and death. Thus, Jane's mother was to be frail and delicate during the years when Jane would need her most.

The course of historical events was at one of its peaks when Jane was born:

Her neighbors and kin, though rustics short of specie, were the nation's first expansionists. Had she made her entrance a few weeks later she would have been named Louisiana, like a score of other girl children born west of the mountains that year. For Monroe came home with all of Louisiana in his traveling case, "875,000 square miles of territory at three cents an acre," and the West was beside itself with joy.¹⁶

More serious events were to happen. Shortly after Jane's first birthday, it was learned that Napoleon had been crowned Emperor and that Vice-President Burr had killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel.

The little town only a few miles from the Lampton home was also bounding with excitement, the excitement of settlement. Jane began to travel to town when she was still a small child, and by the time she was six, she was greeting many people on the well-traveled road.¹⁷ At this

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

time, Jane's love for animals became manifest. Varble states that at this tender age, she took up the habit, sometimes quite annoying, of caring for weak or lame animals; this trait would remain with her throughout her life and show itself in her son Sam.

Also, at an early age, Jane became associated with Negroes. Her grandfather had given her mother and father two slaves, Christina and Toby, and Jane was in the constant companionship of the slaves or their children. Besides going to town with her father or her grandfather, Jane often accompanied Silas, a Negro slave, who drove the supply wagon. Through Silas, Jane came to know many of the colored people in Columbia.

Another attitude which Jane would carry into her adulthood and then pass on to her sons was also learned when she was a child. For almost two years, her father, Benjamin Lampton, had been ready to give his life in fighting against the English; however, when the war was over, Benjamin decided that "most wars are a mistake." "This strange and unpopular knowledge"¹⁸ Jane would carry into her later years and pass on to her sons.

Throughout the first thirteen or fourteen years of her life, Jane Lampton lived in several houses with her parents, and spent some months with her grandparents, the Caseys. From her grandmother,

¹⁸Ibid., p. 34.

Jane learned the remedies for illnesses and the rules for application, which she passed on to her children, and which Samuel was to make use of in later years:

Mrs. Casey encouraged Jane to take her turn at mortar and pestle and brewing kettle. She helped concoct liniments and blisters to ease pain; became familiar with the medicinal foxglove, yarrow, licorice, yellow jessamine, ipecac, and rue. She knew that flaxseed tea was loaded with strang nutriments. . . . A brew of wild cherry bark was considered a fine sedative. Fern sweet was marked "tonic and alterative." Pokeberry bounce was as gaudy as a sunset. Peppermint could hardly be overdone; and if you wanted a really exquisite hue, add flowers of sulfur to milk.¹⁹

Several legends, or bits of gossip, concerning Jane's marriage to John Marshall Clemens have been widely circulated. According to a story told by Jane herself, Wecter relates that Jane had been dating Richard Barret, a young medical student from Columbia, Kentucky, who lived eighteen miles from her home.²⁰ Since Jane had been seen with Barret regularly, most people thought they were engaged. Although Barret was shy, he finally summoned the courage to write Jane's uncle, with whom she was living, to ask if he could drive Jane home from a party and propose to her then. Instead of proceeding with the plan, Jane's uncle Lewis let her read the letter, whereupon Jane became angry and embarrassed and would not see Barret again. Barret left

¹⁹Ibid., p. 37.

²⁰Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 17.

the area, and to stop the "wagging" tongues, Jane married John Marshall Clemens, whom she respected but did not love.²¹

Varble relates another version of this same incident. After Ben Lampton lost his property through foreclosure, he and his wife moved to Tennessee, leaving the two girls with Lewis, his brother. A short time later, Lewis also lost his home and an inn because of his debts. Since Jane feared being alone and because of her love for Barret, she rode the stage to Barret's home, where she planned to tell him her plight; Jane assumed that he would propose to her at that time. Barret was sympathetic and understanding, but he did not ask Jane to marry him. Jane was hurt and angry, and she told Barret not to visit her again. Her only thought was to marry someone else; in this way, she could hurt Barret as much as he had hurt her. Since John Marshall Clemens was a respectable lawyer and was in love with her, Jane married him May 6, 1823. Although she had great respect for him, Jane did not love Clemens.²²

Both of these accounts are based upon Jane's memory when she was over seventy, and some forty-three years after her husband's death. If these accounts could be proved, many conclusions could be made about the effects on Sam of his parent's strained marriage.

²¹Ibid., pp. 17-18.

²²Varble, Jane Clemens, The Story of Mark Twain's Mother, pp. 73-74.

Mr. Coplin asserts that Sam grew up in a home which was almost completely lacking in marital affection.²³

Shortly after the end of the first year of their marriage, Jane and John Marshall moved to Gainesboro, Tennessee, where the latter was to assume a position as lawyer.²⁴ It was a happy move for Jane because her father, her sister, and her stepmother lived in a neighboring Tennessee county in a town named Sparta.

In the following July, Jane gave birth to her first child, whom she named Orion.²⁵ In March of 1827, Jane, John Marshall, and little Orion moved to Jamestown, a small settlement in the Cumberland range where John was certain that he could become wealthy. In September, Jane gave birth to another child, this one a girl named Pamela.²⁶ The months passed by quickly. "Little Pamela was followed too quickly by another child, a boy whom John asked to name for his two brothers, the deceased and the living: Pleasants Hannibal."²⁷

²³Keith Coplin, "Representations of Father-Son Relations in the Major Novels of Samuel Clemens," unpublished master's thesis, Department of English, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas,

²⁴Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 29.

²⁵Samuel C. Webster, Mark Twain, Business Man (Boston, 1946), p. 44.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 32.

The child died only three months later, but Jane established a bond between the women of the community and herself when she lost and buried her child in the rugged country. After John's brother Hannibal and his wife moved to Jamestown, both families of Clemenses led the social circuit. At New Year's, they went from house to house with their husbands and a fiddler, setting up figures for reels and dancing the night away.²⁸

According to Wecter, a second daughter was born to Jane and John Marshall in May of 1830; her name was Margaret, in memory of Jane's mother. Shortly after the baby's birth, John Marshall bought a small farm nine miles north of Jamestown. When Jane refused to take the children to the uninhabited area, her husband went by himself and remained there through the autumn and winter, but the spring brought his defeat. He returned to Jane, and after a reconciliation, the family moved on up the river to a place called Pall Mall, where little Benjamin was born during 1832.²⁹ The Clemenses remained in Pall Mall two years and were again off to a new home, this one to be in Florida, Missouri. After many days of tiring travel, the Clemens family reached their destination, where they were greeted by Jane's father and her sister Patsy. The excitement of reaching their

²⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 34.

destination was not, however, nearly as exciting as would be the events of the coming autumn.

CHAPTER II

JANE AND SAMUEL CLEMENS, 1835-1890

On November 30, 1835, following the Clemens' arrival in Florida, Missouri, Jane Clemens' fourth son was born, two months prematurely.¹ The child was christened Samuel Langhorne Clemens, after his paternal grandfather and after an old friend of Sam's father's.²

In the late autumn of 1835, the nation. . . looked up to see. . . Halley's Comet. . . trailing in its wake a diffuse glory. On November 17, it achieved its perihelion, and began once more slowly to fade, not to return for seventy-four years and five months, again reaching its maximum splendor on April 19, 1910. To Mark Twain, . . . this apparition seemed mystically bound up with his own span from birth to death. "I came in with the Comet," he said, "and I shall go out with the Comet"--this he did.³

Throughout the years when Sam's father was alive, Sam and John Marshall showed little sympathy for each other. "The boy's volatile temperament apparently lay beyond the range of the father's understanding, as also, in all likelihood, did that of the mother from

¹ Edward Wagenknecht, Mark Twain, The Man and His Work (Norman, 1961), pp. 6-7.

² DeLancey Ferguson, Mark Twain: Man and Legend (New York, 1943), p. 20.

³ Dixon Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal (Cambridge, 1952), p. 43.

whom he inherited it."⁴ However, the mother-son relationship was very different. During the first twelve or thirteen years of Sam's life, he acquired many of his mother's habits and ideas which would one day be illustrated in his novels.

Jane did not believe that little Sam could possibly live through the first winter after his birth. Only the baby's determination seemed to keep him alive. According to Varble, in the following spring, Sam was examined by Dr. Chowning, the young physician who delivered Sam in the absence of Dr. Meredith, the family doctor. It is reported that Dr. Chowning "found Mrs. Clemens and her children tumbling the baby--that undersized, seven-months baby--on a quilt on the floor, teaching him some strenuous antics, as if he were a bear cub."⁵ This type of demonstrative affection always existed between Jane and Sam.

According to Wecter, the Clemens' financial and social positions seemed optimistic in 1837. The Quarles-Clemens' store maintained a thriving business, and John Marshall was appointed one of sixteen commissioners of the Salt River Navigation Company. He also headed a six-member commission to promote a Florida and Paris Railroad, and he and Quarles, his brother-in-law, were named trustees for the Florida Academy, an educational effort which did not succeed. On

⁴Wagenknecht, Mark Twain, The Man and His Work, p. 8.

⁵Rachel Varble, Jane Clemens, The Story of Mark Twain's Mother (New York, 1964), pp. 123-124.

November 6, 1837, John Marshall became judge of the Monroe County Court, "the zenith of his professional life."⁶ However, the tide of events soon changed. The business partnership between Quarles and Clemens was dissolved, and Jane's husband began farming. Shortly after the death of their daughter Margaret, the Clemenses moved to Hannibal, Missouri, leaving behind the pity and sympathy extended to them because of their poor financial condition.⁷ Throughout this financial crisis, Jane Clemens neither antagonized nor shamed her husband for his failure. Jane's kindness toward and obvious respect for her husband gave Sam the security and stability which he desperately needed.

Jane's desire for her sons to have an education caused Sam to begin school when he was four years old at Mrs. Horr's school, a small log house.⁸ According to Neider, Mrs. Horr was a middle-aged lady from New England who always required her school children to read a Bible verse and then say a prayer. Jane's educational and religious teachings had been presented to Sam in many ways; however, he had never seen the need for prayer and church until he prayed at school for

⁶ Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, pp. 47-48.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 51-52.

⁸ Charles Neider, ed., The Autobiography of Mark Twain (New York, 1961), p. 33.

a piece of gingerbread, which he then stole from the desk of the baker's daughter. He was so awed by the performance that he continued to pray selfish prayers. When Jane questioned Sam about his conduct, he confessed that he had been praying for revenue only and that he was no longer a Christian. Jane comforted him and told him that he would have many friends if he continued to pray such prayers because most people were selfish.⁹

According to Wecter, Jane joined the Presbyterian Church in 1843, when Sam was eight years old.¹⁰ The pastor of the church, the Reverend Joshua Tucker, recalled Jane as "a woman of the sunniest temperament, lively, affable, a general favorite."¹¹ Sam described his mother as "a Christian, but no willing martyr like her milksop son Orion; when inconsistency between her theory and practice was pointed out, she would reply, "Religion is a jugfull: I hold a dipperfull. . . . I know that a person that can turn his cheek is higher and holier than I am. . . but I despise him, too, and wouldn't have him for a doormat."¹² Annie Webster's account of her grandmother Jane shows that Jane was not a strict, unwavering Presbyterian but, rather, a fun-loving mother

⁹Neider, The Autobiography of Mark Twain, pp. 34-35.

¹⁰Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 86.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., p. 228.

who wanted to give her children every possible opportunity: "I can't imagine where they got the idea that Grandma was so pious and strait-laced." Once, when Annie was reading the paper to Jane, Jane became exasperated and said, "Hang it!" with a pleased look because she felt that she was on the borderline of swearing.¹³ Of course, she did attend church, and believed in God, and she tried to rear her son in a religious atmosphere.¹⁴

Little Sam grew up attending Sunday School, although he really did not enjoy it. It is obvious that he possessed the rebellious nature his mother had in her youth regarding church and school. "Book learning and piety, day school and Sunday school, went hand in hand through the weeks."¹⁵ According to Wecter, Sam's first Sunday school "was in a shabby little brick Methodist church on the public square called the Old Ship of Zion. The class was taught by a stonemason named Richmond."¹⁶ This teacher required his pupils to recite Bible verses from memory; Sam won the prize week after week by repeating the same verses about the five foolish virgins. Sam's second Sunday school was in the basement of Reverend Joshua Tucker's Presbyterian

¹³ Samuel C. Webster, Mark Twain, Business Man (Boston, 1946), p. 226..

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 85.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Church. When he was ten or eleven, Sam was compelled to remain after Sunday school for the sermon, "Calvinistic exhortations which dealt in limitless fire and brimstone, and thinned the predestined elect down to a company so small as to be hardly worth the saving."¹⁷ Sam did not believe in Hell, although he was afraid of it.¹⁸ Even as a small and sensitive boy, "harrowed by the stern sermons of those times, cowed by thunderstorms at night and the lightning that seemed to flash like the terrible swift sword of an avenging Deity, Sam Clemens appears to have been a silent rebel withal."¹⁹

In a letter to Orion, Sam stated his convictions about Christ: "Neither Howells nor I believe in hell or the divinity of the Savior, but no matter, the Savior is none the less a sacred Personage, and a man should have no desire or disposition to refer to him lightly, profanely, or otherwise than with the profoundest reverence."²⁰ According to Long, Clemens' belief was in a larger God than the one in the Old Testament, "in a greater mind governing the immutable laws of time and change."

In his philosophy the individual became merely a unit in the larger scheme of life. . . a belief which destroyed all illusions of a personal God. Nevertheless, Twain insisted

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 85-87.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 88.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰A. B. Paine, Mark Twain's Letter, I (New York, 1917), 323.

upon a divine spirit. "No one who thinks can imagine the universe made by chance," he once observed. "It is too nicely assembled and regulated. There is, of course, a great Master Mind, but it cares nothing for our happiness or our unhappiness." Declaring the Old Testament portrait of a wrathful God to be merely "a portrait of a man, if one can imagine a man with evil impulses far beyond the human limit," Clemens found it "the most damnatory biography that ever found its way into print."²¹

Although he believed in God, Sam took much longer to establish a religious belief that would have satisfied his mother or could satisfy Livy. This instance came at the time approaching Livy's death:

With remorse at having destroyed her own faith, Clemens wrote his wife: "Dear, dear sweetheart, I have been thinking and examining and searching and analyzing, for many days, and am vexed to find that I more believe in the immortality of the soul than misbelieve in it." As expected her reply was one of pleasure.²²

As Jane became a non-too-faithful church member in her later years, so Sam became an old man filled with bitterness and cynicism.

One of Jane Clemens' most remarkable characteristics was her kindness. She loved animals and cared for anything or anyone who was hurt or mistreated. Jane had the habit of caring for dogs and cats that were homeless and hungry. On one occasion, Jane took a whip away from a man who was beating his horse; the cart the animal was pulling was over-loaded with kegs of nails, and the animal could not possibly

²¹E. Hudson Long, Mark Twain Handbook (New York, 1957), p. 358.

²²Ibid., p. 361.

have pulled it. Jane's persuasion was so effective that the man confessed that he was to blame; he also promised that he would never abuse a horse again.²³

On still another occasion, Jane saw a vicious Corsican chasing his daughter down the street with a rope in his hand, declaring that he would whip her with it. Jane opened her door and allowed the frightened girl to take refuge in the Clemens' home. Jane then stood in the doorway, refusing to allow the man to continue his pursuit, although he swore and cursed her. Neider's account of the event is vivid:

She did not flinch or show any sign of fear; she only stood straight and fine and lashed him, shamed him, derided him, defied him in tones not audible to the middle of the street but audible to the man's conscience and dormant manhood; and he asked her pardon and gave her his rope and said with a most great and blasphemous oath that she was the bravest woman he ever saw; and so went his way without another word and troubled her no more. He and she were always good friends after that, for in her he had found a long-felt want--somebody who was not afraid of him.²⁴

Sam's "passionate humanitarianism, his lifelong indignation against bullies and other shapes of overmastering power, came straight from his mother Jane."²⁵

Sam inherited his mother's love for animals and her fun-loving nature. Sam's greatest love was for cats; he was once quoted as saying,

²³Neider, The Autobiography of Mark Twain, p. 29.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 128.

"Next to a wife whom I idolise, give me a cat."²⁶ According to Wagenknecht in Mark Twain: The Man and His Work, the young writer would give up almost any of his time to play with a cat. Danbury and Tammany were Twain's favorite felines at Stormfield; "no matter what he was doing, let Danbury appear in the offing and he was observed and greeted with due deference, and complimented and made comfortable."²⁷ Although dogs somewhat irritated Sam, the Clemenses always had dogs at their homes. The following passage shows Sam's love for these animals:

After Mrs. Clemens' death, he wished "I could see a dog that I knew in the old times! And could put my arms around his neck and tell him all, everything, and ease my heart." One of the most touching passages in "The Death of Jean" relates how he and his daughter's dog were drawn together in their common grief.²⁸

When Sam became extremely pessimistic during his last years, he turned to animals for comfort. "They delivered him from the domination of the Moral Sense, for, like the angels, they never sinned and therefore are sure of heaven."²⁹ In The Prince and The Pauper, Twain allowed the young prince to find comfort in a calf;³⁰ in A Connecticut

²⁶ Wagenknecht, Mark Twain: The Man and His Work, p. 130.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 132.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 134.

³⁰ Mark Twain, The Prince and The Pauper (New York, 1964), p. 121.

Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Clarence suggests to the Yankees that a race of cats to rule them would be good since men would not agree to be deprived of the gewgaws of royalty.³¹

As pointed out in Chapter I, Jane had been full of life and vigor during her childhood. According to Neider, Twain is quoted as having said that his mother had a great deal of trouble with him, but he thought she enjoyed it. His younger brother Henry never burdened her with his antics: therefore, Sam's mischievousness furnished her relief and variety. Jane was reminded of her youthful mischievousness when she was informed by Henry that Sam had poured his medicine down a crack in the floor. To keep from having to do embroidery work as a child, Jane had placed her expensive needles in the spaces between the boards in the floor of her room.³² Sam also gave some of his medicine, Perry Davis's Pain-Killer, to his cat. The animal went into hysterics and turned over most of the furniture in the room and knocked over the flowerpots as he jumped out of the window.³³ Thus, it seems that Samuel Clemens inherited not only his mother's kind nature but also her fun-loving nature.

³¹ Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (New York, 1963), p. 299.

³² Varble, Jane Clemens, The Story of Mark Twain's Mother, pp. 195-196.

³³ Neider, The Autobiography of Mark Twain, pp. 37-38.

Jane Clemens' views about slavery and religion and her kindness and mischievousness all played an important role in Sam's life. As a child, Sam was constantly in contact with Negro slaves, just as his mother had been. In The Autobiography of Mark Twain, Mark made the following statements:

All the Negroes were friends of ours, and with those of our own age we were in effect comrades. I say in effect, using the phrase as a modification. We were comrades and yet not comrades; color and condition interposed a subtle line which both parties were conscious of and which rendered complete fusion impossible.³⁴

Jane Clemens had a slave boy who had been brought from Maryland to Hannibal, Missouri. According to the Autobiography edited by Neider, Mark lost his temper one day due to the poor slave child's singing. Tears came to Jane's eyes as she explained that as long as the little boy was singing, she knew he was not thinking about his mother, but when he stopped, she feared that he would remember.³⁵ Sam never again complained about Sandy's singing. As a child, Jane Lampton Clemens had been carried and entertained by the Negro servants, and she had established a lasting fondness for them. As an adult, she felt it cruel to separate members of a slave family by selling them to different masters. Sam Clemens must have been thoroughly impressed by his mother's attitude toward slaves because he "paid two colored

³⁴Ibid., p. 6.

³⁵Ibid., p. 7.

students' way through college. He considered this as partial reparation due from every white man to every black man."³⁶

According to Neider, Sam, as a child, saw two incidents which involved slaves. Once, he saw a dozen Negro men and women chained to each other, "lying in a group on the pavement, awaiting shipment to the southern slave market." He is quoted as having said, "Those were the saddest faces I have ever seen." As a boy, Sam also watched a white man kill a Negro man for some trifling offense. Although the slave had done nothing to merit the fatal punishment he received, most of the people sympathized with the slave's owner because he had lost a valuable piece of property.³⁷ These two incidents remained in Sam's memory throughout his life and may have added to his dislike of slavery.

Sam must also have felt a deep respect and almost love for "Uncle Dan'l," the middle-aged slave "whose sympathies were wide and warm and whose heart was honest and simple and knew no guile."³⁸ Twain's own account proves his attitude toward Negroes as illustrated through his description of Dan'l:

He has served me well these many, many years. I have not seen him for more than half a century and yet spiritually

³⁶A. B. Paine, Mark Twain, A Biography, II (New York, 1912), 701.

³⁷Neider, The Autobiography of Mark Twain, p. 33.

³⁸Milton Meltzer, Mark Twain Himself (New York, 1960), p. 17..

I have had his welcome company a good part of that time and have staged him in books under his own name and as Jim, and carted him all around--to Hannibal, down the Mississippi on a raft, and even across the Desert of Sahara in a balloon--and he had endured it all with the patience and friendliness and loyalty which were his birthright. It was on the farm that I got my strong liking for his race and my appreciation of certain of his fine qualities. This feeling and this estimate have stood the test of sixty years and more and have suffered no impairment. The black face is as welcome to me now as it was then.³⁹

When Twain wrote The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Nigger Jim was one of the most important and lovable characters in the book. As has been pointed out previously by Coplin, Nigger Jim may have assumed the role of Huck's father in the novel.⁴⁰ No greater compliment could have been paid to Jim than to have him assume the role of a kind, warm-hearted father.

Jane's major influence on Sam came during the first twelve or thirteen years of his life. After this time, Sam quit school and began to work. On March 24, 1847, when Sam was eleven years old and his mother was forty-three, John Marshall Clemens died. Paine tells that Sam stood beside his father's coffin and promised his mother that he

³⁹Meltzer, Mark Twain Himself, p. 17.

⁴⁰M. Keith Coplin, "Representations of Father-Son Relations in the Major Novels of Samuel Clemens," unpublished master's thesis, Department of English, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas, 1968, p. 11.

would be a better boy, with the condition that he could quit school.⁴¹

It is generally agreed that it was a year later before Sam quit school and began working. Sam's affection and love for his mother naturally became greater at this time of need and sorrow than it had been when Sam did not have the responsibility of an adult.

After her husband's death, Jane moved her family to a much-too-expensive dwelling and then moved again to a small cottage on Hill Street. She was no longer the bright and cheerful girl who had married the studious lawyer; Jane Clemens had not escaped the hardships of the years, the bearing of seven children, or the struggle against poverty.

Her slight physique she still held proudly erect, but beneath the auburn curls now beginning to turn gray, her humorous eyes and mouth held traces of anxiety, and the impulsive nature that had once hurried her into wedlock now often found its vent in moods of sharp-tongued exasperation, and a crack on the skull with a thimble for wayward Sam. But always its incandescence cooled quickly, whether toward her children or others, though she never hesitated to speak her mind in any company.⁴²

Orion and Pamela both worked, trying to help their mother with her financial responsibilities. Sometime in 1849, Sam went to work as Mr. Ament's printer's devil. Sam later worked for his brother Orion, but because of Orion's inability as a businessman, Sam became

⁴¹Paine, Mark Twain, A Biography, pp. 74-75.

⁴²Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 125.

dissatisfied and decided to leave Hannibal. When Sam left, Jane made him swear on a Bible that he would "not throw a card or drink a drop of liquor" while he was gone.⁴³ According to Wecter, "the good-bye Sam spoke to Hannibal was a final and absolute valediction. . . . Sam Clemens emerged from his matrix to range the world as prentice printer, Mississippi pilot, miner, journalist, lecturer, and ultimately, author. But Mark Twain never said good-bye to Hannibal."⁴⁴

In her later years, Jane Clemens moved to Keokuk, where Sam had bought her a house. Pamela and Orion lived with their mother, who, along with Orion, was given a monthly allowance by Sam. On October 27, 1890, Jane Lampton Clemens died.⁴⁵

Samuel Clemens had been influenced at every turn by his mother. Sam's temperament, his love of red, his tenderness toward animals, his impulsive emotion, his curiosity, his unconventionality: all these were inherited from his mother. Her views on religion and slavery she passed on to her son. One can state with certainty that Jane Clemens exerted a significant influence both on her son and on the writer, Mark Twain.

⁴³Ibid., p. 262.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 264.

⁴⁵Long, Mark Twain Handbook, p. 216.

CHAPTER III

SAM CLEMENS' MOTHER SUBSTITUTES

Jane Clemens' influence on her son was so profound that Sam searched throughout his life for his mother's qualities in other women. Jane had been a kind and understanding mother to Sam, and she had helped him direct his interests and ideas in worthy and advantageous directions. Some critics feel that Sam had an Oedipus complex because of his dislike for John Marshall Clemens, his father. In later life Sam found two mother figures who had many of the qualities or characteristics his mother possessed; these two women were Mrs. Mary Fairbanks and Olivia Langdon Clemens, Sam's wife.

The contrasting personalities of Jane and John Clemens created an atmosphere which was certain to have an effect on the sensitive child Sam. According to Canby, Sam was "born neurotic,"¹ and this neuroticism may have accounted for the brilliance of his masterpieces. Charles A. Allen blames the neurotic tendencies on Sam's father, not his mother. Van Wyck Brooks makes several statements concerning the negative effect Jane had on Sam and his inability to overcome his

¹ Henry Seidel Canby, Turn West, Turn East (Boston, 1951), p. 251.

mother's dominating character. However, regardless of Brooks' mistake in regard to Jane's personality, he was correct in stating that she impressed it on Sam's mind "that woman is the inevitable seat of authority and the fount of wisdom."² Jane paid special attention to Sam when he was small because of his poor health. In later life, Jane is quoted as having said to Sam, "You gave me more uneasiness than any child I had."³ "She was always scolding him, comforting him, forgiving him, punishing and pleading with him, fixing her attention upon him, and exercising her emotions about him."⁴ Because there was no intimate bond between Sam and his father, one can safely assume that he turned to his mother.

Sam had tremendous respect for his mother's moral opinions; "she 'punished him and pleaded with him, alternately'--with one inevitable result: to fear God and dread the Sunday School."⁵ Two particular instances illustrate Sam's unwavering attempt to please his mother. When John Marshall Clemens died, Jane made Sam promise, beside his father's coffin, that he would be a better boy. Sam, who was stricken with grief, said that he would promise anything, as long as he

² Van Wyck Brooks, The Ordeal of Mark Twain (New York, 1920), p. 33.

³ Ibid., p. 32.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., p. 37.

did not have to go to school. The second instance occurred when Sam decided to leave Hannibal and make his first excursion into the world. Jane again made Sam promise "not to throw a card or drink a drop of liquor"⁶ while he was away. According to Wecter, there is no reason to believe Sam broke his promise because it was not in his nature to take such things lightly.⁷ Because of his mother's influence, Sam's view of the ideal woman was as a "paragon of purity, the Divinely-appointed civilizer of coarse masculine clay."⁸ From Sam's conception of his mother's character came "his chivalrous regard for women."⁹

Sam first met "Mother" Fairbanks on the Quaker City excursion. She was a middle-aged woman who had been born in Ohio in 1828. In 1852, she had married Abel W. Fairbanks, co-owner of a printing establishment in Cleveland and publisher of the Cleveland Herald.¹⁰ Mrs. Fairbanks was a meticulous writer whose first impression of Samuel Clemens was as follows:

We have D. D. 's and M. D. 's--we have men of wisdom and men of wit. There is one table from which is sure to come a peal of laughter, and all eyes are turned toward Mark Twain, whose face is perfectly mirth-provoking. Sitting

⁷ Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 262.

⁸ Ibid., p. 176.

⁹ Minnie M. Brashear, Mark Twain, Son of Missouri (New York, 1964), p. 84.

¹⁰ Dixon Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks (San Marine, 1949), p. 20.

lazily at the table, scarcely genteel in his appearance, there is something, I know not what, that interests and attracts. I saw today at dinner venerable divines and sage-looking men convulsed with laughter at his drolleries and quaint, odd manners.¹¹

Mark's impression of Mrs. Fairbanks is evident:

She was the most refined, intelligent, and cultivated lady in the ship, and altogether the kindest and best. She sewed my buttons on, kept my clothes in presentable trim, fed me on Egyptian jam, (when I behaved), lectured me awfully on the quarter-deck on moonlit promenading evenings, and cured me of several bad habits. I am under lasting obligations to her.¹²

It is apparent that Samuel Clemens looked to Mrs. Fairbanks as he would to a mother and that she treated him like a child although he was only seven years her junior. "Her maternal attitude fitted precisely the pattern of Mark Twain's temperament. He enjoyed a touch of feminine domination all his life--believing, with a faith characteristic of Victorian and Western America, that woman with her finer sensibilities was the true arbiter of taste, manners, and morals."¹³

Mrs. Fairbanks was willing to give Sam Clemens the maternal attention that he was seeking. She censored his writing, criticized his habits and appearance, and helped him to gain a little more social poise.

¹¹Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. 21.

¹²Milton Meltzer, Mark Twain Himself (New York, 1960), p. 94.

¹³Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. 23.

Mrs. Emily Severance, another passenger on board the Quaker City, gave an account of seeing Sam tear up several sheets of paper on which he had written an article and then throw them into the sea. When she inquired about his actions, he remarked, "Well, Mrs. Fairbanks thinks it oughtn't to be printed, and, like as not she is right."¹⁴ Sam trusted her decisions implicitly and took advantage of her criticism even in his personal life. According to Kaplan, he was a member of a group of Quaker City passengers who met regularly for serious discussions; his attendance at these meetings and at the prayer meetings was a result of Mrs. Fairbanks' persuasion. One afternoon he even had a serious conversation with the Reverend Mr. Bullard, the ship's chaplain who later confided to a friend that there might be hope for many "lost" souls if he could only convert the rebellious Mr. Clemens. Sam himself even became what the other passengers called a "fresh convert" and led the evening devotions one night. Kaplan also states that Mrs. Fairbanks aided Sam in controlling his language and temper. Some Quaker City passengers believed, regardless of Mrs. Fairbanks' influence, that Sam was an irreverent, uncouth gambler who imbibed too freely. Sam remarked to Mrs. Fairbanks, "You don't know what atrocious things women, and men too gray-haired and old to have their noses pulled, said about me. And but for your protecting hand I would

¹⁴Ibid., p. 24.

have given them a screed or two that would have penetrated even their muddy intellects."¹⁵

When Sam fell in love with Livy shortly after his return from the Holy Land, he could find comfort and understanding only in Mother Fairbanks. Sam had a great deal of difficulty convincing Olivia that she should marry him. He did everything he could think of (including exaggerating his injuries after falling off a wagon so Livy could doctor and care for him) to stay near her and attempt to persuade her to be his wife. Livy's uncertainty left Sam rather despondent, and on the following lecture tour, he stopped in Cleveland to see Mrs. Fairbanks "and confide to her that he was in love, and to get from her advice in his campaign of winning Olivia."¹⁶ When Sam finally received a "yes" from Livy and before he informed his own family of his engagement, he sent a telegram to Mrs. Fairbanks in Cleveland, greeting her with the happy news. A few months prior to this time, Sam had visited Mrs. Fairbanks and had written Livy, "It is jolly to be here. I was starving to hear somebody speak your name. And now I can talk to Mrs. Fairbanks as much as I please about you."¹⁷ Sam even consulted

¹⁵ Justin Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain (New York, 1966), pp. 45-46.

¹⁶ Edgar Lee Masters, Mark Twain, A Portrait (New York, 1938), pp. 71-72.

¹⁷ Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. 28.

Mrs. Fairbanks about Livy's engagement ring and the possibility of establishing their honeymoon home near her.¹⁸ Upon Sam's marriage to Livy, Mrs. Fairbanks "largely relinquished her responsibility for 'civilizing' him into Livy's wifely hands."¹⁹

Through the following years, Sam and Mrs. Fairbanks continued to correspond; however, the letters became fewer and fewer as time passed, although the friendship remained. According to Wecter, Mrs. Fairbanks visited Sam and Livy's Hartford home several times: there was a reunion in New York, and Sam sent the Fairbanks a thousand dollars in 1879 when ill-fortune had overcome them.²⁰ Sam and Livy were abroad and heavily burdened with disasters of their own when Mrs. Fairbanks died in 1898, but Sam's words of warm sympathy were sent to her son and daughter who survived her: "I am grateful to know that I was one who for a generation held an unchallenged place in her favor. I was never what she thought me, but was glad to seem to her to be it. She was always good to me, and I always loved her."²¹

Van Wyck Brooks' view of Samuel Clemens' relationship with his wife is one about which there is general disagreement: most critics

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 29-30.

²¹Edward Wagenknecht, Mark Twain, The Man and His Work (Norman, 1961), p. 113.

believe that Brooks was almost completely incorrect in his assumption that Sam was in complete bliss when he was in his mother's company, and that Jane Clemens and Olivia Langdon Clemens warped his artistic nature. However, it is necessary that Brooks' view be presented:

As we can see now, it was affection rather than material self-interest that was leading Mark Twain onward and upward. It had always been affection! He had never at bottom wanted to "make good" for any other reason than to please his mother, and in order to get on he had had to adopt his mother's values of life: he had had to repress the deepest instinct in him and accept the guidance of those who knew the ropes of success. As the ward of his mother, he had never consciously broken with the traditions of Western society. Now, a candidate for gentility on terms wholly foreign to his nature, he found the filial bond of old renewed with tenfold intensity in a fresh relationship. He had to "make good" in his wife's eyes, and that was a far more complicated obligation. As we shall see, Mark Twain rebelled against her will, just as he had rebelled against his mother's, yet could not seriously or finally question anything she thought or did. He adored her as little less than a saint: which is only another way of saying that, automatically, her gods had become his.²²

DeVoto, Wagenknecht, and Ferguson have helped to destroy Brooks' myth of the feminine tyrant: however, it is still apparent that Sam often looked to Livy for the criticism and assurance he had received from his mother and from Mrs. Fairbanks.

After their marriage, Samuel Clemens tried extremely hard to make Livy happy and to satisfy her. When he wrote, he always asked Livy to read the manuscript. In order to get attention and to feel the stern

²² Brooks, The Ordeal of Mark Twain, p. 106.

hand of reproof, Sam often inserted passages or words which he knew Livy would delete from the manuscript:

I often interlarded remarks of a studied and felicitously atrocious character purposely to achieve the children's delight and see the pencil do its fatal work. . . . Now and then we gained the victory and there was much rejoicing. Then I privately struck the passage out myself. It had served its purpose.²³

Livy did help her husband rephrase the vulgarities and slang expressions he so often used. Her reforms did not stop just with her husband's writing. According to Sam himself, she stopped his drinking entirely and his smoking considerably, reduced his slang and boisterousness a good deal, and stopped his habit of carrying his hands in his pockets.²⁴ Thus, it was not only Mark Twain, but also Samuel Clemens, whom Livy edited.

Sam presented many social problems to Livy, but she eventually managed to solve or correct them. Sam loved his wife intensely, but he also had a tendency to look to her as a mother for attention and correction. Sam once remarked that he was the most difficult child his wife had.²⁵ Livy also loved Sam intensely and did everything

²³ DeLancey Ferguson, Mark Twain: Man and Legend (New York, 1943), p. 218.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 147.

²⁵ Wagenknecht, Mark Twain, The Man and His Work, p. 168.

possible to make him happy and comfortable. She even called him "Youth"; one may wonder who initiated the name. In Livy, Sam found a woman who could use her authority as a woman to keep him in line. According to Sam, Livy managed things completely and with little, if any, help from her husband. The following examples are illustrative of this:

1875: I mean to try to go down the Mississippi river in May or June. . . But there's nothing certain about it-- except that at the last moment Livy will put her foot on it.

1882: I cannot come, because I am not Boss here, and nothing but dynamite can move Mrs. Clemens away from home in the winter season.

1891: I'm going to do whatever the others desire, with leave to change their mind without prejudice, whenever they want to.

1895: According to Mrs. Clemens's present plans-- subject to modification, of course--we sail in May.

1901: If Livy will let me I will have my say.

1903: Livy is coming along. . .and, in the matter of superintending everything and everybody had resumed business at the old stand.²⁶

Thus, it seems that Samuel Clemens did look to his wife Livy and to Mrs. Fairbanks as he had formerly looked to his mother. "The influence of his own mother, and of decorous 'Mother' Fairbanks and semi-invalid Livy Langdon in the later years, powerfully re-enforced his conviction

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 167-168.

that woman, in her exquisite purity and gentleness, is the born
mentor of the male."²⁷

²⁷Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal, p. 176.

CHAPTER IV

FICTIONAL MOTHER-SON RELATIONSHIPS

Jane Clemens' influence on the character and personality of the man Samuel Clemens has been established in the two previous chapters; her influence on the writer Mark Twain is as evident as her influence on the character and personality of the man. These manifestations appear in all but one of Twain's major novels: The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Gilded Age, The Prince and The Pauper, and Pudd'nhead Wilson. The impact of the affection, companionship, and understanding Jane and her son shared is presented in the relationships which existed between Twain's fictional mothers and their sons. Regardless of the individual character's personality, each mother was tender to and understanding of her son; each loved her son deeply and made any sacrifice necessary for his benefit.

First, it should be explained that Twain wrote several novels in which there were no mothers, but in these novels, he did portray mother figures. In the first three novels to be discussed--The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and The Gilded Age--the sons have no natural mothers who exist in the novel itself; however, they do have mother figures who take the place of their natural mothers.

In The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Aunt Polly and the Widow Douglas are prime examples of mother figures. Since neither Tom nor Huck has a mother, these two women are portrayed as the maternal influences on the young boys.

Aunt Polly was Tom Sawyer's mother's sister. When Tom's mother died, her son went to live with his aunt. Aunt Polly tried desperately hard to do as much as she could for Tom. She often felt that she was not doing her duty by him:

I ain't doing my duty by that boy, and that's the Lord's truth, goodness knows. Spare the rod and spile the child, as the Good Book says. I'm a-laying up sin and suffering for us both, I know. He's full of the Old Scratch, but laws-a-me! he's my own dead sister's boy, poor thing, and I ain't got the heart to lash him, somehow. Every time I let him off, my conscience does hurt me so, and every time I hit him my old heart most breaks.¹

Aunt Polly was much like Jane Clemens in this respect; many times Jane could not punish Sam because of his clever personality and his angelic appearance.

Like Jane Clemens, Aunt Polly believed in patent medicines. Once, when Tom was in love with Becky Thatcher and could no longer find enjoyment in his baseball and bat, Aunt Polly took out her medicines and tried to find a cure for her poor nephew:

¹Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (New York, 1955), p. 3.

She was an inveterate experimenter in these things. When something fresh in this line came out she was in a fever, right away, to try it; not on herself, for she was never ailing, but on anybody else that came handy. She was a subscriber for all the "Health" periodicals and phrenological frauds; and the solemn ignorance they were inflated with was breath to her nostrils. All the "rot" they contained about ventilation, and how to go to bed, and how to get up, and what to eat, and what to drink, and how much exercise to take, and what frame of mind to keep one's self in, and what sort of clothing to wear, was all gospel to her, and she never observed that her health journals of the current month customarily upset everything they had recommended the month before. She was as simple-hearted and honest as the day was long, and so she was an easy victim. She gathered together her quack medicines, and thus armed with death, went about on her pale horse, metaphorically speaking, with "hell following after." But she never suspected that she was not an angel of healing and the balm of Gilead in disguise, to the suffering neighbors.²

On the occasion previously mentioned, when Tom was in love with Becky, Aunt Polly finally gave him some patent painkiller. Tom thoroughly disliked taking the medicine, but he thought it might be funny if he gave some to Peter, Aunt Polly's cat. After swallowing the medicine, Peter chased around the room, knocking over furniture in his path, and sailed out the window. Aunt Polly rapped Tom on the head with her thimble for his inhumane act, but after he explained that he was simply trying to help Peter in the same way that she was trying to help him, Aunt Polly could not reprimand him again and even felt bad about having given Tom the medicine.³

² Ibid., pp. 98-99.

³ Ibid., pp. 100-102.

This incident is autobiographical in nature. Jane Clemens was also "infatuated with patent medicines and found plenty of opportunity to test them on her sickly son, Sam."⁴ Sam Clemens once gave his mother's cat some painkiller with the result that the cat jumped out the window. Thus Twain was inserting part of his own life into his book.

One of the most important instances in which Aunt Polly shows her maternal instinct is when Tom is thought to be drowned. When he sneaked back home and found Aunt Polly bereaved, he finally realized how much she loved him:

"But as I was saying, he warn't bad, so to say--only mischeevous. Only just giddy, and harum-scarum, you know. He warn't any more responsible than a colt. He never meant any harm, and he was the best-hearted boy that ever was"--and she began to cry. . . . "God'll take care of him. Oh, . . . I don't know how to give him up! I don't know how to give him up! He was such a comfort to me, although he tormented my old heart out of me, 'most."⁵

Tom realized that his aunt was in great agony; he longed to jump out, throw his arms around her, and prove to her that he was not dead. In this respect, Aunt Polly was like any other mother. She was lonely, overwhelmed with grief, and stricken with the thought that she would never be able to see her nephew grow into a successful man of moral character.

⁴Milton Meltzer, Mark Twain Himself (New York, 1960), p. 13.

⁵Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, pp. 123-124.

Aunt Polly had the same tenderness, affection, and love for people and animals that Jane Clemens had. Jane helped her neighbors in any time of need, and she loved her children. DeLancey Ferguson gives an account of what Twain said concerning the character Aunt Polly:

Tom Sawyer is not autobiography in its details, but in its personalities, altered or heightened for dramatic purposes, it is essentially life-like. Aunt Polly is Jane Clemens with no embellishments beyond a dialectal crudity of speech which was not Jane's.⁶

The Widow Douglas was also portrayed by Twain as a mother figure although she did not play as important a role as did Aunt Polly. The Widow Douglas took care of Huck when he was delirious with fever at the Welshman's home. At this time, she did not know that Huck was the one who had informed the Welshman of the proposed attack on the Widow; she cared for and nursed Huck because "he was the Lord's." After Huck's secret was revealed at the party, the Widow said she wanted Huck to live with her and that she would educate him and start him in his own business. Huck did remain at the Widow's home for three weeks, after which he disappeared. The Widow grieved at her loss and continued her search for Huck in vain. When Tom Sawyer finally found Huck in an old empty hogshead behind the abandoned

⁶DeLancey Ferguson, Mark Twain: Man and Legend (New York, 1943), pp. 29-30.

slaughterhouse, he tried to convince Huck to go back to the Widow's to live:

Don't talk about it, Tom. I've tried it, and it don't work; it don't work, Tom. It ain't for me; I ain't used to it. The widder's good to me, and friendly; but I can't stand them ways. She makes me git up just at the same time every morning; she makes me wash, they comb me all to thunder; she won't let me sleep in the woodshed; I got to wear them blamed clothes that just smothers me, Tom; they don't seem to let any air git through'em, somehow; and they're so rotten nice that I can't set down, nor lay down, nor roll around anywh'er's; I hain't slid on a cellar door for--well, it 'pears to be years; I got to go to church and sweat and sweat--I hate them ornery sermons! I can't ketch a fly in there, I can't chew. I got to wear shoes all Sunday. The widder eats by a bell; she goes to bed by a bell; she gits up by a bell--everything's so awful reg'lar a body can't stand it.⁷

It is evident that the Widow Douglas was trying to do for Huck what Jane Clemens attempted to do for her son Sam. Both women, the real person, Jane Clemens, and the character, the Widow Douglas, attempted to educate Sam and Huck and give them the proper social environment so that they would be acceptable to society. The Widow Douglas wanted to do for Huck what any mother would do for her son: she disciplined him and gave him love and attention. Huck did not even know enough to appreciate what she was doing, although the Widow was sacrificing her time, love, and money for Huck's benefit. In showering all her maternal instincts on Huck, the Widow Douglas resembles Jane

⁷Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, pp. 271-272.

Clemens, who gave Sam all the affection and attention he could possibly have needed or wanted.

In The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, the protagonist Huck Finn had a cruel, degenerate father, but he also had no mother, the one saving grace most of Twain's characters possess. Huck did, however, meet several women who gave him the same maternal understanding, attention, and even love that a mother would show to her son.

As in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, the Widow Douglas was Huck's maternal influence; her sister, Miss Watson, attempted to make Huckleberry learn to read and spell and was always nagging him. She sometimes antagonized him for hours trying to teach him things about which he had no interest. But the Widow often intervened and allowed Huck to rest or go outside to play. Once, when Huck had sneaked out of his room at night to meet Tom Sawyer and had gotten his new clothes covered with grease and clay, the Widow did not scold Huck but simply cleaned off his clothes. The Widow also was able to explain a small part of her religion to Huck. He wanted to go along with the Widow's Providence, but he certainly did not want anything to do with Miss Watson's: "I thought it all out, and reckoned I would belong to the widow's if he wanted me. . . ."⁸ Huck was told about "the bad place"

⁸Mark Twain, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (New York, 1959), p. 21.

by Miss Watson, but he could "see no advantage in going where she was going."⁹

Huck soon became accustomed to the Widow's ways, and he even reached the point of liking school: "I liked the old ways best, but I was getting so I liked the new ones, too, a little bit. The widow said I was coming along slow but sure, and doing very satisfactory. She said she warn't ashamed of me."¹⁰ The Widow's understanding Huck was a great comfort for him. Many times when Miss Watson scolded Huck unmercifully for his awkwardness, the Widow kindly put in a good word for him:

One morning I happened to turn over the salt-cellar at breakfast. I reached for some of it as quick as I could to throw over my left shoulder and keep off the bad luck, but Miss Watson was in ahead of me, and crossed me off. She says, "Take your hands away, Huckleberry; what a mess you are always making!" The widow put in a good word for me, but that warn't going to keep off the bad luck. . . .¹¹

Throughout the novel, the Widow Douglas showed the motherly love and understanding she had for Huck. It was this same type of love which Jane Clemens showed to her son.

Mrs. Judith Loftus was another of Twain's mother figures although she played a very small part in the novel. When Huck and Nigger Jim were going down the river on the raft, Huck decided to go

⁹Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 24.

¹¹Ibid.

into town to find out what was happening. When he arrived at a small house and could see a woman sitting inside, Huck decided to find out from her what the news was about Nigger Jim and himself. Huck was dressed as a girl, and he was not very good at walking, talking, or acting like one. Mrs. Loftus soon discovered that her guest was a boy; she guessed that he was a runaway apprentice who had a cruel master:

Set down and stay where you are. I ain't going to hurt you, and I ain't going to tell on you, nuther. You just tell me your secret, and trust me. I'll keep it; and, what's more, I'll help you. So'll my old man if you want him to. You see, you're a runaway 'prentice, that's all. It ain't nothing. There ain't no harm in it. You've been treated bad, and you make up your mind to cut. Bless you, child, I wouldn't¹² tell on you. Tell me all about it now, that's a good boy.

Mrs. Loftus was extremely understanding of Huck and gave him some pointers on how a girl should act:

Bless you, child, when you set out to thread a needle, don't hold the thread still and fetch the needle up to it; hold the needle still and poke the thread at it; that's the way a woman most always does, but a man always does t'other way. And when you throw at a rat or anything, hitch yourself up a-tiptoe and fetch your hand up over your head as awkward as you can, and miss your rat about six or seven feet. Throw stiff-armed from the shoulder, like there was a pivot there for it to turn on, like a girl; not from the wrist and elbow, with your arm out to one side, like a boy. And, mind you, when a girl tries to catch anything in her lap she throws her knees apart; she don't clap them together, the way you did when you caught the lump of lead. . . . Now trot along to

¹²Ibid., p. 66.

your uncle, . . . and if you get into trouble you send word to Mrs. Judith Loftus, which is me, and I'll do what I can to get you out of it.¹³

Although Huck did not have to seek Mrs. Loftus' help, the reader feels assured that she would have helped him in any possible way. Just as Jane Clemens was always ready to help anyone in distress, so Judith Loftus was willing to allow a young stranger to remain in her home and give him motherly advice.

Another mother figure who resembles Mrs. Loftus, and therefore Jane Clemens, was Mrs. Grangerford. She also willingly accepted Huck into her home and told him he could stay as long as he wanted; like Jane Clemens, she helped anyone in distress or need. When Huck first arrived at the Grangerford home, Mrs. Grangerford realized that the poor boy was wet and hungry. She arranged for Huck to have some dry clothes to wear and some buttermilk, cornpone, corn-beef, and butter to eat. She was a typical mother in that she loved her children deeply and cared for them beyond any reproach; Huck was accepted as another child, and he was given "a home there as long as I wanted it." Mrs. Grangerford was also like Jane Clemens in that she did not question her husband about any matter. She accepted his belief in the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud and, without complaint or argument, even watched her sons die.

¹³Ibid., pp. 67-68.

Aunt Sally is another of Twain's mother images in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. She was Tom's mother's sister and Aunt Polly's sister and therefore Tom's aunt. When Huck went to the Phelps' home to attempt to retrieve Nigger Jim, he was mistaken for Tom Sawyer. Aunt Sally was so happy to see him that she threw her arms around him and hugged him for what seemed like hours:

She grabbed me and hugged me tight; and then gripped me by both hands and shook and shook; and the tears come in her eyes, and run down over; and she couldn't seem to hug and shake enough, and kept saying, "You don't look as much like your mother as I reckoned you would; but law sakes, I don't care for that, I'm so glad to see you! Dear, dear, it does seem like I could eat you up!"¹⁴

When Tom Sawyer did arrive, he played the part of Sid Sawyer. Aunt Sally was just as happy to see Sid as she was to see Tom. She "hugged him and kissed him over and over again, and then turned him over to the old man, and he took what was left."¹⁵ Aunt Sally poured all the love and affection she had on the two boys. In the escapade of Jim's escape both Huck and Tom were "beat." When Huck returned the next morning, Aunt Sally was greatly relieved to discover that her "nephews" were safe:

When we got home Aunt Sally was that glad to see me she laughed and cried both, and hugged me, and give me one of them lickings of hern that don't amount to shucks, and said she'd serve Sid the same when he come.¹⁶

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 215-216.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 224.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 270.

When Tom did not return that night, Aunt Sally became distressed. The scene in which she puts Huck to bed is a pathetic demonstration of motherly love. Little imagination is needed to replace the fictional Aunt Sally and Huck with the real Jane Clemens and Sam:

And then when I went up to bed she come up with me and fetched her candle, and tucked me in, and mothered me so good I felt mean, and like I couldn't look her in the face; and she set down on the bed and talked with me a long time, and said what a splendid boy Sid was, and didn't seem to want to ever stop talking about him; and kept asking me every now and then if I reckoned he could "a" got lost, or hurt, or maybe drowned, and might be laying at this minute somewheres suffering or dead, and she not by him to help him, and so the tears would drip down silent, and I would tell her that Sid was all right, and would be home in the morning, sure; and she would squeeze my hand, or maybe kiss me, and tell me to say it again and keep on saying it, because it done her good, and she was in so much trouble.¹⁷

Huck felt restless and guilty that night when he slipped downstairs and saw Aunt Sally sitting "there by her candle in the window with her eyes toward the road and the tears in them."¹⁸ When Tom was brought home with a bullet wound, Aunt Sally was distraught with grief. She watched over him day and night until his fever broke. After Tom recovered and after Aunt Polly's arrival, Tom and Huck were caught in their deception. Even though Aunt Sally discovered that Huck was not her nephew, she wanted to adopt him.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 273.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 274.

Aunt Sally was definitely a mother figure in Huck Finn. She gave both Tom and Huck not only care and attention but also motherly love; she even wanted to adopt Huck. Beyond reasonable doubt Mark Twain transferred to Aunt Sally the maternal love and solicitude of his own mother.

In The Gilded Age, the mother figure is Mrs. Hawkins, who resembles Jane Clemens even more than the other mother images because her husband was as irresponsible a businessman as was John Marshall Clemens, yet neither Jane nor Mrs. Hawkins ever complained about the many business and financial failures their husbands experienced.

Mrs. Hawkins was also like Jane Clemens because both of them never failed to help someone in need. Mrs. Hawkins was perfectly happy to accept little Clay into her home after his own mother died; Mr. Hawkins brought Clay home without his wife's knowing it and asked her if what he did was right:

If you've done wrong, Si Hawkins, it's a wrong that will shine brighter at the judgment day than the rights that many a man has done before you. And there isn't any compliment you can pay me equal to doing a thing like this and finishing it up, just taking it for granted that I'll be willing to it. Willing? Come to me, you poor motherless boy, and let me take your grief and help you carry it.¹⁹

¹⁹Mark Twain and Charles D. Warner, The Gilded Age, I (New York, 1915), 17-18.

Mrs. Hawkins tried to console the boy in the loss of his mother; she "held him by the hand at the grave, and cried with him and comforted him; . . . this new mother tucked him in his bed. . . and coaxed him to talk about his troubles, and then heard him say his prayers and kissed him good night, and left him with the soreness in his heart almost healed and his bruised spirit at rest."²⁰

The day after Clay's mother's funeral, Mrs. Hawkins came again, and helped him to dress, and combed his hair, and drew his mind away by degrees from the dismal yesterday. . . . And after breakfast they two went alone to the grave, and his heart went out to his new friend and his untaught eloquence poured the praises of his buried idol into her ears without let or hindrance. Together they planted roses by the headboard and strewed wild flowers upon the grave; and then together they went away, hand in hand, and left the dead to the long sleep that heals all heartaches and ends all sorrows.²¹

Mrs. Hawkins loved Clay as she did her own children. After they had adopted another child, a girl named Laura, Mr. Hawkins asked his wife if she, under certain circumstances, would part with the children. Her reply shows how deep her love was:

Not for anything in the world. I love them just the same as I love my own. They pet me and spoil me even more than the others do, I think.²²

Clay was a kind and understanding child. After Mr. Hawkins' death, he supported his family and helped them in every way he could.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 18.

²¹ Ibid.

When Laura killed Colonel Selby, Clay was in Australia. He sold his business at a loss and went back to the States and headed for Hawkeye, where his step-mother and the rest of the household were. Clay's arrival was timely, for the family was yet to experience another tragedy:

But the greeting and congratulations were hardly finished when all the journals in the land clamored the news of Laura's miserable death. Mrs. Hawkins was prostrated by this last blow, and it was well that Clay was at her side to stay her with comforting words and take upon himself the ordering of the household with its burden of labors and cares.²³

The Prince and The Pauper is another novel which contains a significant mother-son relationship. That the young prince had no mother to turn to is possibly the author's way of showing what a desperate situation the young prince was in. His father loved him, but really did not have time for him or understanding of his problems. The young prince found only one woman, with the exception of Tom Canty's mother, who seemed interested in his welfare. When he was running away from the tramps and John Canty, he found shelter and protection in a barn. The next morning, two little girls found him in their barn and took him to their mother:

The children's mother received the king kindly and was full of pity, for his forlorn condition and apparently crazed intellect touched her womanly heart. She was a widow and rather poor; consequently she had seen trouble enough to enable her to feel for the unfortunate. She imagined that the demented boy had

²³Mark Twain and Charles D. Warner, The Gilded Age, II (New York, 1915), 302.

wandered away from his friends or keepers, so she tried to find out whence he had come in order that she might take measures to return him. . . .²⁴

This peasant woman took care of the young prince even though he was ragged, dirty, and apparently demented. In this respect she resembles Jane Clemens, who helped any friend or stranger, regardless of his need or condition. The young boy had found only rebuke and disgust in the other people he had encountered along his journey of escape. In the peasant woman, he found someone who actually cared about him; she fed him and gave him a place to sleep, although she had very little with which to provide for her own family.

Tom Canty's mother is one of the two best examples of a mother who sacrifices herself for her son's protection and welfare. Mrs. Canty's husband was a vicious, cruel man who did not love his son or any other member of his family. He beat and cursed Tom for not bringing home money he had begged for, and often sent the poor peasant boy to bed without any food. Tom's mother protected her son by taking the blows herself:

When he came home empty-handed at night, he knew his father would curse him and thrash him first, and that when he was done the awful grandmother would do it all over again and improve on it, and that away in the night his starving mother would slip to him stealthily with any miserable scrap or crust she had been able to save for him by going hungry herself, notwithstanding she was often caught in that sort of treason and soundly beaten for it by her husband.²⁵

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid., p. 17.

When the Prince of Wales found himself in Tom Canty's home, his identity mistaken for that of Tom Canty, he tried to explain who he was. This explanation only angered John Canty and caused Mrs. Canty and Nan and Bet to think Tom had become insane:

The mother fell on her knees before the prince, put her hands upon his shoulders, and gazed yearningly into his face through her rising tears. Then she said, "O my poor boy! Thy foolish reading hath wrought its woeful work at last and ta'en thy wit away. Ah! Why didst thou cleave to it when I so warned thee 'gainst it? Thou'st broke thy mother's heart. . . ." The woman sank back to a sitting posture on the floor, and covering her eyes with her hands, gave way to heartbroken sobs and wailings.²⁶

After further arguments with John Canty, the Prince of Wales was struck by a blow from Canty, which sent him staggering into the arms of Mrs. Canty, "who clasped him to her breast and sheltered him from a pelting rain of cuffs and slaps by interposing her own person."²⁷

Tom Canty discovered what happens to boys who defy or ignore their mothers when he rode in the royal coronation procession. Tom's mother came to the parade to see if there was a possibility that the young king might really be her son. When Mrs. Canty ran up to Tom after having recognized him through his strange gesture of shading his face with his palm outward, "she embraced his leg, . . . covered it with kisses, and cried, 'O my child, my darling!' lifting toward him a face

²⁶Ibid., p. 56

²⁷Ibid., p. 57.

that was transfigured with joy and love."²⁸ Tom Canty's only words were "I do not know you, woman!"²⁹ Tom was so struck by his own words that he was ashamed and brokenhearted; his stolen royalty no longer had any meaning for him. Tom's conscience bothered him greatly, and he did not even notice the people who lined the streets to see him. After much trial and argument, Tom Canty and the Prince of Wales were properly identified:

The proud and happy Tom Canty rose and kissed the king's hand, and was conducted from the presence. He did not waste any time, but flew to his mother to tell her and Nan and Bet all about it and get them to help him enjoy the great news.³⁰

Jane Clemens' influence is clearly manifest in The Prince and The Pauper. Mrs. Canty is as unselfish and devoted a mother as Jane Clemens was. She loved her son in poverty and in wealth, and he, in turn, gave her his love and care.

This same type of mother-son relationship is present in Pudd'nhead Wilson. In this novel, Roxana, a colored slave, is the mother of Thomas à Becket Driscoll; however, she exchanged her son for a white man's son who would someday inherit great wealth. Roxana was willing to sacrifice the pleasure of having her own son with her in order that he might have more material advantages in his life. However,

²⁸ Ibid., 182.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 202.

without knowing it, Roxy was causing her son to grow farther and farther away from her. Tom, as he was soon called, went to live with his aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. York Driscoll, after Percy Driscoll died.

Young Tom kept his real mother in her place by making her say "Sir" to him and constantly reminding her that she was only a slave. Once he even struck Roxy:

He struck me, en I warn't no way to blame--struck me in de face, right before folks. En he's al'ays callin' me nigger-wench, en hussy, en all dem mean names, when I's doin de very bes' I kin. Oh, Lord, I done so much for him--I lift' him away up to what he is--en dis is what I git for it.³¹

When Tom was nice to his mother, she forgave him all the many mean things he had done to her: ". . . all her sore places were healed, and she was happy; happy and proud, for this was her son, her nigger son, lording it among the whites and securely avenging their crimes against her race."³² Tom was impudent to Roxy until she told him that he was her son; he then appeared to be kind to her, but he soon sold her down the river. When Roxy ran away from her master, she came back and told Tom again who she was. His behavior seemed to improve again, but this time, he killed Judge Driscoll while attempting to steal money.

³¹Mark Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson (New York, 1964), p. 24.

³²Ibid.

The two boys' identities were finally straightened out, and Roxy's son was convicted of murder and eventually sold down the river.

Even though Roxy caused both herself and her son to have a life filled with misery, she attempted to make the supreme maternal sacrifice by placing her son in the environment and wealth of a respected family. Roxy loved her son very much and did not receive any reciprocal feeling from her son, Roxy did receive love and care from the boy whom she raised as her son:

The young fellow upon whom she had inflicted twenty-three years of slavery continued the false heir's pension of thirty-five dollars a month to her, but her hurts were too deep for money to heal; the spirit in her eye was quenched, her martial bearing departed with it, and the voice of her laughter ceased in the land. In her church and its affairs she found her only solace.³³

Thus we learn that, like Jane Clemens, Roxy found her final solace in religion.

Of Twain's major novels, only one, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, does not have a mother-son relationship. Sandy is the one character in the novel who is most capable of showing her maternal instincts, yet she has no son. However, just as the Yankee realized how much he needed Sandy, so Samuel Clemens knew that he must have Livy, one of his "other" mothers, in order to live happily. In this respect Mark Twain portrayed Sandy as a substitute mother figure, a relationship which resembled his own relationship with Livy.

³³ Ibid., p. 142.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Jane Lampton Clemens was an energetic and vivacious woman who was descended from a long line of sturdy pioneers. She was always made to realize the importance of being strong in times of distress, having a good education, and having worthy ambitions. Jane's mother died when she was thirteen; therefore, Jane did not have a maternal influence during an age when she needed her mother most. But from her grandparents and from her father Jane learned her social habits, her attitude toward slavery and religion, and her tendency to be outspoken and the defender of the oppressed or needy.

Jane's marriage to John Marshall Clemens was one which was not conducive to the normal psychological and emotional growth of an intelligent, creative boy, such as Samuel, the third son. Little sympathy existed between John Marshall and Sam. John Marshall was never a successful businessman, and Sam had to look to his mother for stability and encouragement. From her he also obtained his basic attitudes toward religion, slavery, animals, and the oppressed; his temperament, love of red, curiosity, impulsive emotion, and his unconventionality he also received from his mother.

Jane's influence on Sam was so strong that he searched for the same type of leadership qualities in other women. In Mrs. Fairbanks and in Livy, Samuel Clemens found these prototypes: the one he looked to as a mother and the other he married. Mrs. Fairbanks gave Sam constructive criticism on his personal habits, his appearance, and also on his writing. Besides being his wife, Livy was another mother to Sam. She edited his writing and stopped his drinking. Sam and Livy loved each other immensely, and each had deep admiration for the other. Because of his own mother, Mrs. Fairbanks, and Livy, Samuel Clemens thought of women as "the born mentors of the male."¹

Jane Clemens influenced not only Samuel Clemens the man but also Mark Twain the writer. The most important influence Jane Clemens had on her son can be seen in his novels. Twain portrayed all the mothers or mother figures as kind, loving, and understanding women. The reader can expect to find women who are capable of sacrificing themselves or anything they have for their sons; the mothers are as kind and understanding as the fathers are cold, unloving men. Each mother in Twain's major novels loves her son beyond any doubt. Aunt Polly, the Widow Douglas, Mrs. Grangerford, Mrs. Judith Loftus, Mrs. Hawkins, Mrs. Canty, the peasant woman in The Prince and The Pauper, and Roxana express their love and devotion to their sons. But

¹ Dixon Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal (Boston, 1952), p. 176.

the ultimate mother is Roxana, a Negro slave who sacrificed the pleasure of raising her own son so that he could have money and other material benefits. Twain's ultimate father figure was Nigger Jim, and his ultimate mother figure was Roxana, also a Negro slave. Through these two characters, Twain implies that people who have had difficulty throughout their lives are more sensitive, loving, and understanding of others. Nigger Jim and Roxana had always been slaves and had experienced many hardships. They knew what it meant to serve, to sacrifice, and to suffer, and they wanted their "sons" to live better lives.

Because of Jane Clemens' love and devotion to her son Samuel, his novels show her influence in the many mothers or mother figures whom he created in them. Many critics have discussed Jane and Sam, but DeLancey Ferguson appears to be the only one who has even hinted at the scope of this relationship. It is apparent that Samuel Clemens was strongly influenced by his mother in his personality, appearance, and beliefs; but of greater importance is the influence she exerted on the literary creations of Mark Twain.

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