



Mark Twain's study on Elmira College campus Originally it was on East Hill at Quarry Farm.

## Summers at Quarry Farm --Mark Twain Loved Elmira

The ink on Elmira's charter had been dry only four years when Mark Twain came to town to court the girl with whose picture he had fallen in love many months before and many thousands of miles away. Kind fate had placed Charles J. Langdon of Elmira aboard the steamship Quaker City with Samuel L. Clemens as a fellow passenger bound for a tour of the Holy Land. Langdon was a gay youth of 18; Mark Twain was past 30.

Mark Twain saw in Charlie Langdon's hands a miniature of Olivia Langdon, the younger of Charlie's two sisters. Her face was etched upon his heart in a flashing instant, never to leave it until he went to rest beside her in Woodlawn 43 years later.

Mark Twain met Miss Langdon for the first time in New York, where she and her brother had gone with their father to hear Charles Dickens read from his works at Steinway Hall. Twain realized that the miniature he had seen as the ship lay in the Bay of Smyrna did not do justice to the original, and he made no secret of his feelings.

He was invited to Elmira and came as soon as his plans and the New York & Erie Railroad would permit.

Nothing to compare with the tousel-headed, drawing, buoyant, uninhibited and outlandishly funny Samuel Langhorne Clemens had ever entered Jervis Langdon's mansion on the northwest corner of Main and Church Sts. (It was razed in 1939, its last timber coming down on Nov. 30, 1939, the 104th anniversary of Mark Twain's birth.)

He had been a printer, a Mississippi steamboat pilot, a prospector and miner, a newspaper reporter, a writer who reached quick fame with a humorous piece on "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog," and a lecturer capable of dispelling dignity in any audience.

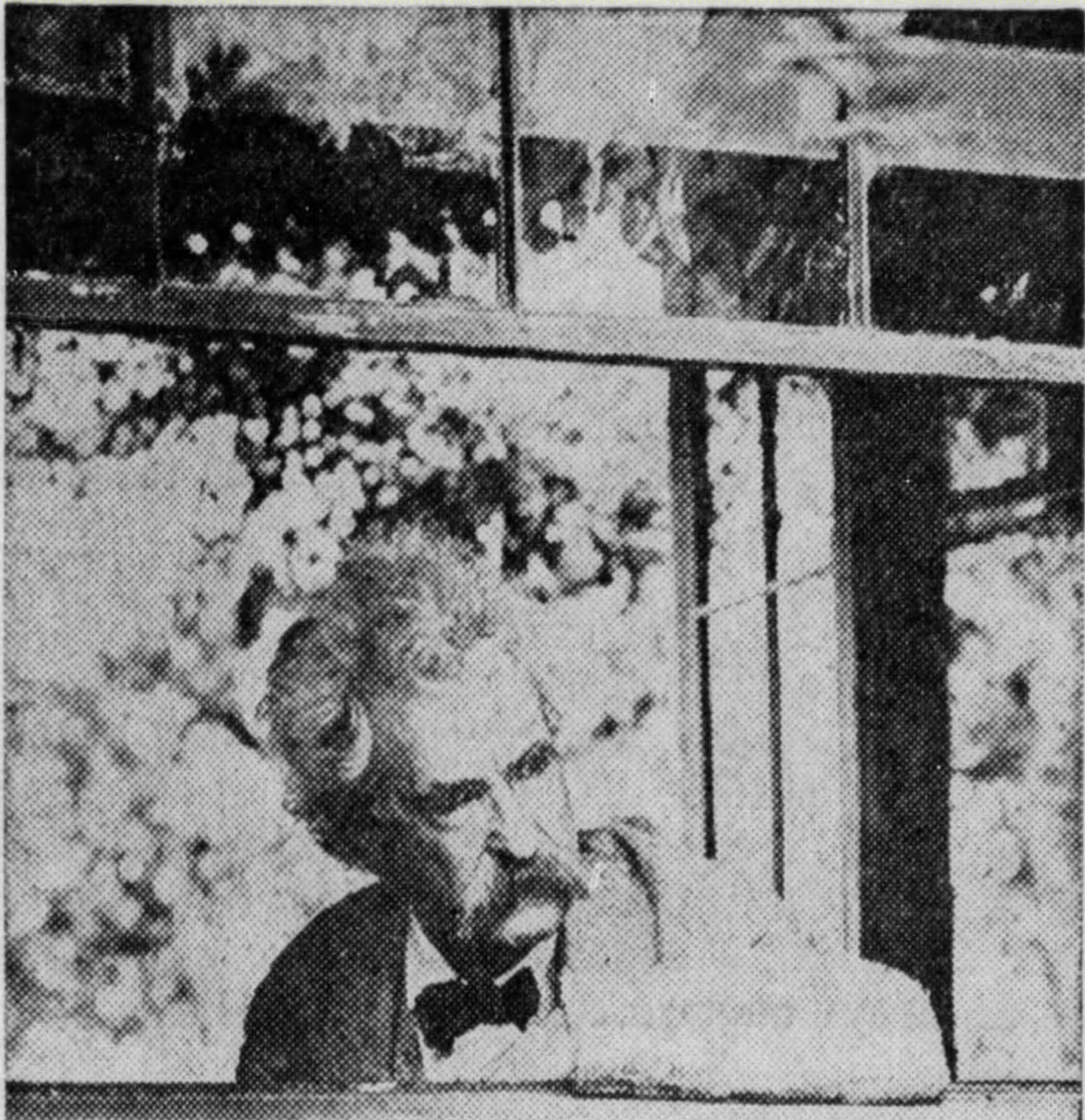
His first book, "The Celebrated Frog of Calaveras County," had come out in 1867 and he was already widely known from his reports in the Alta California, the New York Tribune and other newspapers and publications.

Clearly he was going places, with the pace accelerated by "The Innocents Abroad," perhaps the best known and most spirited travel book ever written. That book was assembled as he toured the Mediterranean with the Quaker City party, some members of which were as painful to Mark Twain as he was abrasive to them.

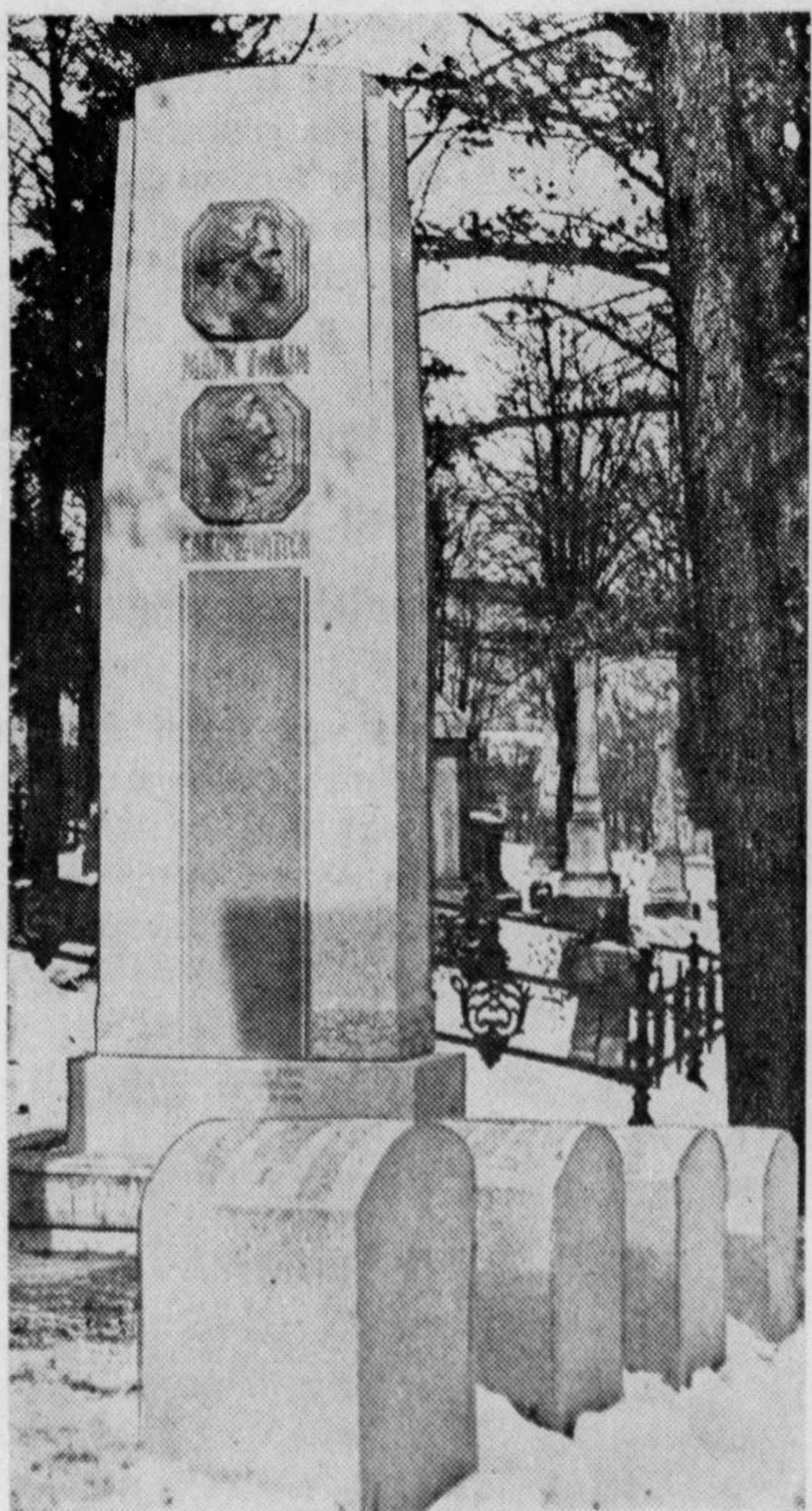
On one of his visits to Elmira he was tumbled from a carriage as he started for the railroad station. He wasn't hurt. But the skill with which he feigned grave shock and the manner in which he accepted the ministrations of the family—with Olivia chief among the nurses—bordered on fraud.

His "convalescence" was sufficiently prolonged to crystallize the romance and their engagement was announced in February 1869. They were married Feb. 2, 1870, with the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher one of two clergymen officiating. The other was a lifelong friend, the Rev. Joseph H. Twichell of Hartford.

They were married in the same room in which funeral services for them were conducted. For a year and a half the couple lived in Buffalo, then moved to Hartford. Mark Twain disposed of his interest in the Buffalo Express for which he wrote editorials and sketches,



A 1902 photo of Mark Twain on East Hill



Samuel Clemens' grave in the Langdon plot

the latter reflecting a humor which time, Olivia, Mrs. A. W. (Mother Fairbanks, William Dean Howells and others brought under restraint and refined. In 1874, his sister-in-law, Susan Langdon Crane, had built as a surprise the study now to be found on the Elmira College campus. It stood on the farm of Theodore Crane (Quarry Farm on East Hill) commanding a view of the Chemung Valley, and Mark Twain's lyrical description of it shows the depth of his appreciation. The Clemens family—including Katy Leary of Elmira who



OLIVIA LANGDON CLEMENS

devoted her life to them and stood at the grave of all but one—spent summers at Quarry Farm for many years, and the study was a busy place.

The greater portion of "Roughing It" was written in Elmira in 1871, before the study was built.

In it were written: 1874, the first half of "Adventures of Tom Sawyer" and the play, "Colonel Mulberry Sellers."

1876, 1880, 1883, "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," 1877-1880, "The Prince and the Pauper."

1879, "A Tramp Abroad." 1882, "Life on the Mississippi."

1888, the greater portion of "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court."

1903, "A Dog's Tale." The 1890s brought the family to Elmira only a few times.

In 1904 Mark Twain came to Elmira on a sad errand. "Livy" had died in Italy where they had gone in the hope that a milder climate would restore her frail health.

His last visit to Elmira was in 1907, when he spoke at the dedication of the organ built in the Park Church as a memorial to his great friend, Thomas K. Beecher, who had died in 1900.

It was a sad Mark Twain who arose to speak at the dedication—sad until he started to speak. Then the humor he couldn't resist broke forth and the audience rocked with laughter as audiences always did.

Some in them surely remembered the sulphurous outburst Mark Twain sent to The Advertiser when the Elmira Ministerial Union booted Beecher out. That piece, signed "S'cat" was reprinted in The Advertiser when Mark Twain died in 1910 and it had lost nothing of its edge in the 41 years between publications.

Summer days often found Mark Twain strolling about town, visiting with cronies, playing billiards at the Century Club or the Langdon home with Beecher often as an opponent, dropping into The Advertiser office (he was a friend of Ed Adams, the editorial writer later to enter the consular service) visiting various stores for paper and pens and other supplies needed in his work and sometimes favoring Klapproth's with the calls that have been preserved in advertisements which have yet to spell Klapproth's name correctly.

It was to Elmira that a man later to know fame came in 1889 to meet the humorist for whom he had a feeling best described

## STREETER ASSOCIATES INC.

BUILDERS

ELMIRA, N. Y.

SINCE 1933

## A SALUTE TO THE CITY of ELMIRA ON ITS 100th BIRTHDAY FROM ELMIRA LODGE 517 LOYAL ORDER OF MOOSE

For over half a century we have been interested in your growth and accomplishments. Your reputation as a friendly city has made many friends for our family fraternity. We feel that thru our Civic Affairs we have helped make you a better place in which to live.

Over a period of years Elmira Lodge has sponsored Christmas and Easter Car Lifts so the aged may attend church services, supported Blood Banks and, in conjunction with the Police Department, supervised Safe Driving tests for automobiles and bicycles. We have donated rooms and equipment to the hospitals and supported all worthwhile fund raising campaigns.

Our Fraternity was founded for the express purpose of protecting and educating children of our departed members — Naturally we are interested in all children of our community and have sponsored Small Fry Baseball and Basketball, a Boy Scout Troup, Youth Bowling and Teen Age Parties. Youth honor day is celebrated each year and, with the cooperation of the Elmira Police Youth Bureau, the outstanding boy in our community is selected and honored with appropriate ceremonies.

The Loyal Order of Moose was born 75 years ago and today has over 2,000 lodges totaling almost a million members. For 50 years the membership has made possible our Child City at Mooseheart, where over 5,000 children have graduated from high school with an education and a trade. For 40 years they have sponsored Moosehaven, where over 2,000 husbands and wives have spent the late years of their lives in contentment and happiness.

Mooseheart, our "Child City," located just 35 miles from Chicago, Illinois, on the beautiful Fox River, is nationally known as a model city that combines vocational training through education, citizenship and religious training with friendly surroundings. Here children who have lost one or both parents are cared for from boyhood to high school graduation and given the finest medical care and recreational facilities to equip them to become useful citizens in their community.

For the aged, Moosehaven, located on the banks of the St. John's River, 16 miles south of Jacksonville, Florida, is an independent community on a 68 acre estate. Nearby is the 100 acre Moosehaven Dairy Farm which supplies the community with its products. Here qualified elderly Moose members and their wives may spend the declining years of their lives in happiness and contentment.

We, the members of this great fraternity, wish the city and the surrounding communities continued success and greater accomplishments in the years to come.

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