

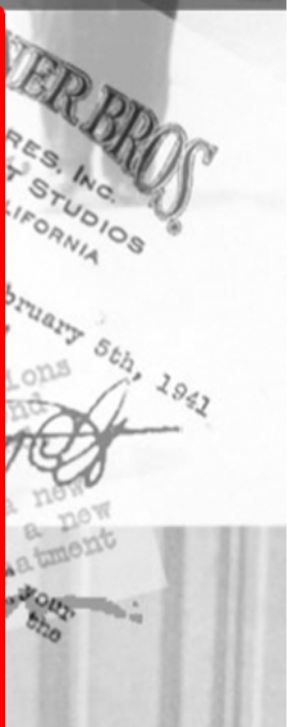
# Behind the Screenplay

## "The Adventures of Mark Twain"

**ORIGINAL  
SOURCE  
DOCUMENTS  
[FOR VIEWING ONLY]**



approached the  
and appreciation  
er's character which  
quite unusual. Most people regard  
from the humorous angle.  
It would give me great pleasure to meet  
and Mrs. Moses, but I fear it will be a good  
while yet before I can go to New York.  
With kindest regards, and hoping to  
hear from you very soon,  
Yours sincerely,  
*Clara Sabido*



Correspondence Compiled and Edited by Saskia Raevouri

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Father, as I cannot  
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'than Mr. Stone  
of course, a

BEHIND THE SCREENPLAY  
Compiled and Edited by Saskia Raevouri

Correspondence Related to the Writing of the Screenplay of  
“The Adventures of Mark Twain” (1944)

Produced by Jesse L. Lasky for Warner Bros. Pictures  
Screenplay by Alan LeMay  
Adaptation by Alan LeMay and Harold M. Sherman  
Addition Dialogue: Harry Chandlee  
All biographical material based on works owned or controlled by the Mark Twain Company, and the play, “Mark Twain”, by Harold M. Sherman.

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This correspondence is based on letters and documents stored in Harold Sherman’s archives in the Special Collections at the Torreyson Library, University of Central Arkansas at Conway. I hereby thank the staff, especially Jimmy Bryant and Betty Osborne, who have always cheerfully helped me to find what I was looking for during my many visits. I also wish to express my gratitude to Mary Kobiella and Marcia Lynch, daughters of Harold Sherman, and to Betty Lasky, daughter of Jesse L. Lasky. All three of these women have unfailingly cooperated with me in my efforts to preserve their parents’ legacies, and in the process have become treasured friends.



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# Know Your Own Mind

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*An Amazing Revelation of Your  
Inner Consciousness*

*by* Harold Sherman

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*"A Master Publication"*

**C. & R. ANTHONY, INC.,**

***Publishers***

**NEW YORK**

**KNOW YOUR OWN MIND**

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planning period just as realistically as though you *had* been in touch with them and, if your thinking with relation to them has been correct and constructive, you will, at the proper time, attract their association and cooperation to the end that what you have visualized and worked toward becomes an accomplished fact.

A few personal experiences will serve to illustrate:

*Mark Twain mid-1930s* → In the middle 1930's, the idea came to me that I might dramatize, for radio, stage and screen, the life of America's great humorist, Mark Twain. Inquiry revealed that the rights to do this would have to be secured through the Mark Twain Estate, which had been established following Twain's death for the purpose of handling the sale and other business relative to his many literary properties. I found that this Estate was managed by an attorney, Charles T. Lark, with office on Fifth Avenue; that he was one of the trustees, and that he had been the lawyer who had drawn up Twain's will and acted as his executor. The Estate was being operated for Mark Twain's only surviving daughter, at that time, Mrs. Ossip Gabrilowitsch of Detroit.

I realized that my ambition to dramatize Mark Twain's life could not be achieved unless I was willing to invest my time and talent in preparation of a full and complete synopsis which might be presented to Mr. Lark in proof of my ability. It was evident that many writers of far greater reputation than mine had sought and were seeking the granting of these same valuable rights. I reasoned that these busy writers would perhaps not be will-

ing nor have the time to prepare any material on speculation but would request these rights of the Estate based upon their established reputations. I therefore decided it was worth the gamble for me to devote all the spare time possible in a study of all writings on, about and by Mark Twain, to saturate my consciousness with his life activities and character, and then to prepare a detailed dramatic outline to show the Estate just how I would propose to handle this subject for the stage.

In preparing this work, which required about six months, I constantly pictured in my mind its acceptance by Mr. Lark and all concerned, when submitted. My conscious mind tried to suggest, at times, that I didn't have the ghost of a chance in competition with big name authors, that I was wasting my time, and that I was letting myself in for a major disappointment.

Intuitively, however, I felt that this project could succeed because I had a profound feeling of kinship for Mark Twain who, in his day, had recognizably used these same powers of Extra Sensory Perception. I hoped that Mr. Lark and Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch and Albert Bigelow Paine, Twain's official biographer, who was then still living, would sense in the reading of my outline that my interest in Twain was not motivated by opportunism but by a deep conviction that my background and understanding could bring Twain to life in dramatic form.

When the outline was finally finished, I had it professionally typed and bound and, with that, I was now ready to make contact with Charles T. Lark for the first

time. I phoned his office and made an appointment through his secretary. The night before keeping this appointment, in my period of meditation, I had what you might call an imaginary interview with Mr. Lark. I saw myself meeting and informing him of the purpose of my visit. I heard Mr. Lark explain politely to me that the Estate placed a high value upon the dramatic rights to Mark Twain's life and had turned down many offers and requests from authors. This information was not intuitive, it had been public knowledge. But, as I visualized my interview with Mr. Lark, I felt that the least he could say or do in appreciation of the time and labor I had put upon the script, would be to say that he would read it. If I could get him to agree to this much, in my first contact, I felt that this would be all that I could possibly expect.

During this meditation, a definite feeling came to me that Mr. Lark *would* agree to read the outline and, the instant I had this impression, I relaxed and went to sleep in the faith that all would go well with my appointment.

Everything *did* turn out exactly as visualized. Mr. Lark was much impressed by the enormous amount of work I had done on speculation, realizing, as I pointed out to him that, if he did not find my work acceptable, all he had to do was to drop the manuscript in the waste basket since I did not possess the rights and could go no further without legal sanction of the Estate.

The copyright laws are such that, while much of an

## THE POWER OF VISUALIZATION

author's writing and life may be in the public domain after his death, and following the expiration of his copyrights, as long as any living relatives remain who require dramatization as a part of any story, permission must be obtained from them or their Estate, for inclusion. In this case, Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch as one of Twain's daughters, was to appear in several scenes.

Mr. Lark said frankly that he could give me no assurance whatsoever that all this work I had done would find favor with the Estate. He showed me a file of letters and telegrams from famous authors and producers, seeking these same rights. He said that Mrs. Gabrilowitsch wanted to make sure that her father's life would be tastefully and sympathetically dramatized and she did not wish to enter into any contract for such dramatization until she knew exactly how the playwright proposed to treat this subject. I left Mr. Lark's office with a light heart and a growing conviction that acceptance of my outline would be only a matter of time.

The waiting periods on any project are the hardest to endure. When you have done all you can, and the results are, as they say, "in the laps of the gods," having no word on how things are going, your conscious mind often upsets you by its fears and doubts and apprehensions. Since your conscious mind, in itself, has only the five physical senses to depend upon, it will try to impress you with the mathematical chances against success and all the human factors which might go wrong or rise up in opposition to a venture. I had my bad moments but



found assurance in the meditation periods when, with the conscious mind's influence blocked out, my extra sensory feelings told me that what I desired would come to pass.

In about ten days, Mr. Lark's secretary phoned and asked me to mail to the office a copy of my bibliography. I knew from this that my outline was receiving serious consideration. Two weeks later, Mr. Lark, himself, called and invited me to lunch. He then reported that he had read the outline and had liked it so much he had mailed it on to the other trustees and Albert Bigelow Paine, and when he had received favorable replies from them, had sent the script to Mrs. Gabrilowitsch. She, too, had written, expressing her liking for the over-all treatment. "And I suppose now," concluded Mr. Lark, "what you want is the *go-ahead?*"

I told him it certainly was, that I desired to work in close association with the Estate in the dramatization and, after some discussion, the contract was agreed upon, granting me the exclusive rights in all dramatic forms.

Further evidence that much can be accomplished in and through consciousness which leads eventually to its materialization in actual life, is demonstrated in this experience:

I had been writing regularly for Boy's Life, the Official Boy Scout publication, for a number of years. Finally I arrived at the point where I felt I had earned higher remuneration for my stories, although the magazine was then paying me the top price allowed by its budget. I

Boy's  
Life

AGREEMENT made by and between the Trustees of the Estate of Samuel L. Clemens, having an office and place of business at No.143 Liberty Street, New York City, parties of the first part, the MARK TWAIN COMPANY, a New York corporation, party of the second part, and HAROLD M. SHERMAN, residing at No. 322 Central Park West, New York City, party of the third part;

W h e r e a s, the parties of the first and second parts own and control the dramatic rights of all kinds in and to the various works and writings of the late Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain), and also own the rights with respect to the use of the name "MARK TWAIN"; and

W h e r e a s, the party of the third part is desirous of securing the privilege of producing in the United States of America, as well as in all foreign countries, a biographical play based on the life and works of said Mark Twain and desires such permission to cover not only the production of said play on the legitimate stage, but also desires to control on the terms hereinafter set forth the motion picture, television, radio and marionette rights with respect thereto;

NOW, THEREFORE, THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSETH: That for and in consideration of the sum of One Dollar (\$1) by each of the parties to the other in hand severally paid, as well as other good and valuable considerations, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, as well as in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements herein contained, this contract is entered into on the following terms and conditions, to wit:

and inure to the benefit of the respective heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns of the several parties hereto, but the same may not be assigned by the party of the third part, without the consent in writing of the parties of the first and second parts first had and obtained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties of the first and third parts have hereunto set their hands and seals, and the party of the second part has caused this instrument to be executed by its proper officers and its corporate seal to be hereunto affixed, this 14 day of March, 1936.

In the presence of:

Edie Jones

Jervis Langdon (L.S.)

W. H. ...

[Signature] (L.S.)  
Trustees of the Estate of  
Samuel L. Clemens.

MARK TWAIN COMPANY  
By

Attest: [Signature]  
Secretary

[Signature]  
President.

In the presence of:

George H. ...

Harold Sherman (L.S.)

March 21, 1936

AGREEMENT made by and between ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE, of the town of Norwalk, Connecticut, party of the first part, and HAROLD M. SHERMAN, residing at No. 322 Central Park West, party of the second part:

W h e r e a s, the party of the first part has written and edited various biographies and biographical sketches in relation to the life of the late Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain); and

W h e r e a s, the party of the second part has acquired from the trustees of the estate of Samuel L. Clemens and the Mark Twain Company the right to produce a biographical play based on the life, works and career of the said Mark Twain, including the production thereof on the legitimate stage, as well as motion picture, television, radio and marionette rights with respect thereto, and said party of the second part is desirous of procuring the consent and permission for the purpose of similarly using the various biographical books and material which have been published and/or edited from time to time by the party of the first part insofar as the said party of the first part still owns or controls the same:

NOW, THEREFORE, THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSETH:

That for and in consideration of the sum of One Dollar (\$1) by each of the parties hereto to the other in hand paid, and other good and valuable considerations, the receipt whereof is hereby severally acknowledged, as well as in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements herein contained, this contract is entered into on the following terms and conditions, to wit:

FIRST: The party of the first part hereby gives and grants to the party of the second part, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns the right and license for the period herein stipulated in the United States as well as in all foreign countries to use such of the biographical material set forth in the several biographical works on the life of the said Mark Twain written and/or edited by the said party of the first part insofar as the same is in any way controlled or owned by the said party of the first part to such extent as may be desired by the party of the second part in connection with his said proposed biographical play based on the life, sayings, works and career of the said Mark Twain, including all dramatic rights, whether for stage production, motion picture, television radio and/or marionette presentation, for such period and on the terms herein set forth. The party of the second part is hereby granted such permission, if desired, to use short extracts or quotations therefrom or otherwise symbolize incidents of the life and sayings of the said Mark Twain such as he may deem desirable in connection with said biographical play; it being understood, however, that the said biographical play and/or adaptation thereof for dramatic production as herein reserved shall be subject to the wise and approval of the party of the first part or his authorized agents. It is further understood and agreed that the party of the second part shall have the right to copyright or have copyrighted the said adaptation or adaptations of said play as so approved and to properly produce and present the same or cause the same to be so produced or presented on the legitimate stage of the United States of America and in all foreign countries for a period up to June 1, 1942, and, thereafter on

payment per annum of the minimum sum as hereinafter reserved. On the expiration and/or termination of this contract or any extensions or renewals thereof, as hereinafter provided, or otherwise, it is understood and agreed that the party of the second part or his assigns shall not in any way use or produce said play as so copyrighted, insofar as any material taken from said biographical works of the party of the first part is concerned, without the written permission of the said party of the first part, or his heirs, executors, administrators or assigns.

SECOND: The party of the second part accepts the rights above set forth and agrees to produce or have said play produced in a first class manner in a first class American city on or before January 1, 1937, war or Act of God not preventing, and upon failure to do so all rights acquired by the party of the second part hereunder shall cease unless said party of the second part shall pay to said party of the first part the sum of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200), on account of the One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) consideration hereinafter stipulated, in which event such initial limit for stage or other production shall be and be deemed extended to January 1, 1938.

THIRD: The party of the second part further covenants and agrees that he will pay or cause to be paid to the party of the first part the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) solely in the manner following, subject to the provisions of the above article "SECOND":- the party of the second part shall pay to the said party of the first part, promptly as and when received, fifty percent (50%) of his gross returns from the production returns from said play until such fifty percent (50%) payments to the said party of the first part shall aggregate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) which is the full payment stipulated hereunder.

FOURTH: This contract, subject to the payment of One Thousand Dollars from production returns as herein stipulated, shall cover the dramatic rights with respect to the biographical material published and edited by said party of the first part in relation to Mark Twain for a period up to June 1, 1942. It is understood and agreed, however, that the party of the second part may extend said contract beyond said date (after having paid said One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) by payment to the party of the first part on or before June 15th, 1942, of the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250), in which event this contract shall be deemed extended for an additional period of one year from June 1, 1942, and the party of the second part by similar payments on June 15th of each year thereafter may as desired likewise extend the terms of this contract for an additional period of one year from time to time.

FIFTH: It is understood and agreed that the party of the first part will read said play as finally prepared by the party of the second part and will give the party of the second part the benefit of his advice and suggestions with respect thereto.

SIXTH: This agreement shall bind and inure to the benefit of the Prospective heirs, executors, administrators and assigns of the several parties hereto. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have hereunto set their hands and seals this 21st day of March, 1936.

Witnesses: N.W. Martin, Charles Lark... Albert Bigelow Paine... Harold Sherman

April 16, 1936.

Mr. Howard Kyle,  
173 West 81st St.,  
New York City.

Dear Howard:

This is to let you know that I am willing to pay you five percent (5%) of my royalties on the stage production of "Mark Twain" in full for all your service and interest of every kind in connection with interesting me with the subject matter and introducing me to Charles T. Lark, attorney for the Mark Twain estate.

I shall also continue to urge that you be selected to portray the role of "Mark Twain" in said stage production when such rights are sold, a role ~~for~~ which I know you to be so much in sympathy with and so well fitted and qualified to play.

If the above suggestion of paying you five percent (5%) of whatever royalties I may receive from the stage production of "Mark Twain" is agreeable to you, your signature below will constitute a binding agreement between us.

It is understood, of course, that this five percent (5%) is to cover the joint royalties of Charles T. Lark and myself, before any division of royalties is made between us.

Harold Sherman

Martha I. Sherman  
Witnessed

Howard Kyle  
Accepted

July 11, 1936.

Dearest:

Just to let you know that good things are commencing to happen. Today, this blistering hot Saturday (which I did not mind personally) I sold a two weeks' option on "Mark Twain" to Harry Moses, producer of "Grand Hotel". Technically, I sold it to Mrs. Moses, who is the power behind his productions, the woman who really selects all his plays. She is a grand person, with that rare inner feeling...an individual you would like a lot. Mr. Moses, at the moment, is in Mt. Sinai hospital with an abscess condition near the rectum (fine talk) and an exploratory operation is to be performed Monday which they hope is not serious. Mrs. Moses is tying the play up so she can go to work on it and try to line up cast and make other arrangements pending her ability to perfect final details with Mr. Moses. My option calls for a total payment of fifteen hundred dollars advance, \$1250.00 more when the real deal is closed inside two weeks. So give Mr. Moses some good thoughts as much depends upon his snapping out of this condition, which they think he will. However, it is evident there is a very close relationship between the two in understanding and love...they've done all of their productions together...and they've picked each play because of the way it has moved them inwardly. Mr. Abrams, their general manager, told me he had never seen Mrs. Moses so worked up over a script, even including her enthusiasm for "Grand Hotel". She told me today, and actually cried when she said it: "Mr. Sherman, I feel that I want to dedicate my life blood to this work of yours. I cannot praise it too highly. It is the finest piece of writing I have ever come across and I think its possibilities, properly and lovingly done, are enormous." It seems unbelievable but these are her very words. She also believes Fredric March would be ideal and has airmailed him the play as well as wired him. Pemberton and Max Gordon also want to do the play and I'll probably have them after me the first of the week. This Miss Dorothy Wolff, who had the contacts, is another gem... she cried today (a hot day for crying) when I told her the family had gone to Michigan for the summer...and said, "Mr. Sherman - you have had to live and feel deeply to have written this play and I know you are coming into your just reward. You should feel very happy that everyone who has read the Twain play is so moved by it...and that now, the finest producer, in my opinion to do this play, should have taken an option on it." She couldn't get used to my taking the whole thing so quietly and said she was amazed at my poise. She asked me if I always took things this way. I told her there were so many ups and downs in this business that one of two things could happen - you could be driven mad or you could develop the impersonal attitude...and I preferred the latter. But it is an inner satisfaction...particularly since Mrs. Moses is of a mind to let me have a real hand in the direction and casting. She says she will insist on every actor or actress actually making up for the part they are supposed to personify before deciding whether they will be acceptable or not. She said each role must be histrionically and photographically perfect...everything done with the most painstaking care. Sounds good, doesn't it? Wish you could be here to see behind the scenes in the next few weeks. I wonder if you can communicate the above news to mother and save me correspondence? In between times I am batting along on the hockey story and trying to clean things up ready for bigger developments which I know are coming.

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## Dramatic Production Contract

Between

*Harry Moses & Elsa Moses*

and

*Harold M. Sherman*

For the production of

*"Mark Twain"*

Dated *July 15 - 1936*

This Dramatic Production Contract is subject to the terms and conditions of the annexed Minimum Basic Agreement effective March 1, 1936, as amended.

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THE DRAMATISTS' GUILD

of

The Authors' League of America, Inc.

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MONDAY, JULY 20, 1936.

Arquette

HAROLD SHERMAN  
WRITES PLAY ON  
"MARK TWAIN"

Harold Sherman, local boy whose family is now visiting in Traverse City, has been commissioned to write a play, "Mark Twain," to be produced in New York this fall, according to a story in the Detroit News of Sunday, written by L. L. Stevenson, also formerly of this city. Mr. Stevenson's story follows:

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NEW YORK, July 18.—Under a contract signed today, "Mark Twain," a play by Harold Sherman, formerly of Detroit, will be produced this fall by Harry Moses, producer of the prize-winning play, "The Old Maid" and the outstanding hit, "Grand Hotel."

The production of the play by Sherman, who once worked on the Ford assembly line, is to be even more elaborate than that of "Grand Hotel," the estimated cost being \$75,000. This places it in a class far beyond any strictly dramatic production yet planned for the coming season.

It is to be in 13 scenes with a cast of more than 60 persons. Rehearsals will begin between the middle of September and Oct. 1 with a Broadway opening early in November. The star for the name part has not yet been selected.

The story, told in episodic form, deals with Twain's life from the age of 35 until his death and in addition to the humor and drama of his history stresses strongly the romance between him and Olivia Lewis Langdon, whom he married with sidelights on the lives of Clara Clemens Gabilowitsch and other members of the family.

Sherman was selected by the Twain estate to write the stage, screen and radio versions of Twain's life. The Sherman family, including Sherman's mother, are passing the summer in Traverse City.

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE  
ELMCREST  
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT

August 18, 1936.

Dear Mr. Sherman,

I received a telegram this morning from Mrs. Gabrilowitsch asking me to say to you that she must see a copy of the play immediately. That was the entire telegram, but I hope you have a revise ready to send, for she seems to be impatient.

I still retain pleasant impressions of the script, and hope all may go well with it. I shall be in New York sometime in September.

Very sincerely yours,

*Albert Bigelow Paine*

August 20, 1936.

Dear Mrs. Gabrilowitsch:

By the time this letter reaches you, you will probably have received a script of my dramatization of the life of "Mark Twain".

I have not wanted to send you a copy until it had been finally revised through a careful going over by Albert Bigelow Paine, so that you would be able to read it and give me the benefit of your suggestions when it represented as finished a form as I could make it.

You will observe that I have been as faithful as humanly possible, for the purposes of dramatization. In some instances I have condensed events into the period of one scene; I have used your father's philosophic or humorous utterances, actually spoken at different times in his life, crystallizing them in different scenes according to their application to the subject matter.

I am told that you have a great knowledge of the theatre. Therefore, I know you can appreciate that I have had to take some poetic license in order to dramatically high light different characters and situations.

For instance, I found it expedient not to mention Jean or work her into the play. Susy, however, by the very nature of her life and passing, afforded material for several effective scenes. Your own character, you will see, has also been used to advantage.

We are planning a souvenir program which is to contain a bibliography, presenting an interesting parallel, telling just what occasions provoked Mark Twain to give vent to his different sayings...and just when and where different events took place.

I feel sure you would like Harry and Elsa Moses, who produced "Grand Hotel" and the Pulitzer Prize play, "The Old Maid". They look upon their production of "Mark Twain" as a hallowed responsibility. They are sparing no expense in their preparations to secure the finest actor for the part of "Mark Twain", a faithful reproduction of the scenes and other characters of the play.

Walter Houston and Fred Stone are at present being considered.

Mr. Paine has expressed himself as being delighted with the dramatization and I very much hope that my effort, which has taken me the better part of two years, may meet with your complete approval. It has been an inspiring task and I feel that your father's life, dramatized, will prove of great inspiration to millions of people today who need greater courage to stand out against economic and personal obstacles.

I shall be most appreciative of any suggestions you may have to offer and am looking forward to the time when I may have the privilege of meeting yourself and Mr. Gabilowitsch.

I cannot say, at the moment, just when the play will go into rehearsal. This is dependent upon concluding arrangements with a star to play "Mark Twain". But it is hoped to be under way late in September, with a Broadway opening around the first of November. There is tremendous interest here in the production and the play will probably be sold out for some weeks before it opens.

I shall eagerly await word from you.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

1201-S

**CLASS OF SERVICE**

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

# WESTERN UNION

**SYMBOLS**

DL = Day Letter  
 NM = Night Message  
 NL = Night Letter  
 LC = Deferred Cable  
 NLT = Cable Night Letter  
 Ship Radiogram

R. B. WHITE  
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER  
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

Received at 41 East 46th St., New York

1936 AUG 23 PM 10 31

NP130 38=GM DETROIT MICH 23 954P

HAROLD SHERMAN, CITY CLUB OF NEWYORK=  
55 WEST 44 ST=

HAVE ENJOYED YOUR PLAY ENORMOUSLY AM WRITING ABOUT IT  
 TOMORROW STOP I REQUEST YOU ON NO ACCOUNT TO ENGAGE FRED  
 STONE FOR THE IMPERSONATION OF MARK TWAIN STOP IT WOULD BE  
 FINE IF YOU COULD SECURE MR HOUSTON=  
 CLARA GABRILOWITSCH.

WESTERN UNION MESSENGERS ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE DELIVERY OF NOTES AND PACKAGES

24. August 1936

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I have had tremendous pleasure in reading your play which certainly has been written with great care and sensitive understanding of the different members of my family. The scene between the creditors, Mr. Rogers and my father ought to be highly effective because of its definite dramatic quality. But without going now into details of approbation, I want to say that there are, nevertheless, some suggestions I would like to make of an important nature. They are difficult to express, however, in a letter and so I am going to ask you if you could not manage to come on to Detroit at your very earliest convenience and have a conference with me regarding these special points that I believe should be changed.

These alterations would not require a great deal of trouble and, in any case, I think you will agree with me after our conversations that they are of decided importance.

It is too bad that I did not know anything about the play until by accident I saw a statement regarding it in the newspaper a couple of weeks ago. It would have been very much easier for us to have our conversations earlier in the year, and not just at the "eleventh hour". I fully appreciate that you would much prefer to have had suggestions from me while the play was still in process of creation. Although my husband is still far from well and I spend all my time with him, I would, nevertheless, gladly make an exception and reserve time for you if you are so good as to make the trip to Detroit.

I am sure that your play can make a very great success and it is easy to see that



you have approached the subject with warm sympathy and appreciation of the serious side of my Father's character which is, as you perhaps know, quite unusual. Most people regard him only from the humorous angle.

It would give me great pleasure to meet Mr. and Mrs. Moses, but I fear it will be a good while yet before I can go to New York.

With kindest regards, and hoping to hear from you very soon,

Yours sincerely,

*Clara Sabido*

P. S. I wired you yesterday asking you on no account to engage Fred Stone to impersonate my Father, as I cannot imagine anyone less suited to his person/<sup>ality</sup> than Mr. Stone would be. Your mention of Walter Huston was, of course, a most welcome one for I am sure he would fill

the role as well as anyone could. Naturally this is going to be the most difficult part of the whole undertaking to find actors and actresses that will at least partially approach the general outline of the people they are impersonating.

C. G.

August 26, 1936.

Dear Mr. Paine:

Thanks for your nice note. I had new copies of the play made, embodying your suggestions, and sent a copy to Mrs. Habrilowitsch.

I received a wire from her day before yesterday which said: "HAVE ENJOYED YOUR PLAY ENORMOUSLY". She followed up today with a letter, which said in part: "I have had tremendous pleasure in reading your play which certainly has been written with great care and sensitive understanding of the different members of my family....I am sure that your play can make a very great success and it is easy to see that you have approached the subject with warm sympathy and appreciation of the serious side of my Father's character which is, as you perhaps know, quite unusual. Most people regard him only from the humorous angle.."

I thought you would be interested in knowing her reaction...she'd like me to come to Detroit so she could talk to me.

*Clara Clemens*

611 BOSTON BOULEVARD WEST  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

27. August 1936

Dear Mr. Sherman:

*What is  
his letter?*

Thank you so much for your very nice letter. I am more than ready to give Mr. Stone the benefit of the doubt, since I know it has happened many times before that a humorist in literature, or a comedian on the stage, may have a serious side which has never been put to use during the early or middle period of his life. I will certainly make every effort to see Mr. Stone in "My American Wife". The difficulty is that I only go out after ten o'clock at night, as I do not like to leave my husband in the daytime. It is not always easy to link up this hour with a performance of the special movie one wants to see. Nevertheless, I shall hope for the best. It has also come to my realization that since Mr. Houston cannot be secured, it is quite possible that there is no other actor who would fill the Mark Twain role any better than Mr. Stone, if as well. We naturally cannot look for an absolutely true representation of any personality, I suppose, and will have to be satisfied with an approach to it.

I note you say you cannot come to Detroit just now. This seems a great pity because the suggestions I have to make cannot well be made on paper. They require discussion and mutual creation, so to speak. I fear that if you postpone

your visit here too long, it might necessitate postponing the opening of the play. My Trustees have assured me that the contract with you reserved the rights of the Estate to approve your script. (Of course, the "Estate" means my personal approval.) It is, however, very unfortunate that I knew nothing about the undertaking until the last moment, so to speak. But I am greatly relieved to know that there is a definite understanding regarding my full approbation.

I am sure, in any case, if you and I could get together, you would be aware of the importance of making certain changes in your play. The very fact that it is already creating so much enthusiasm seems to me all the more reason to leave no stone unturned to strengthen its effect on the public.

I understand the position you are in. You are doubtless very busy in arranging for the cast, and so forth and so on. But on the other hand, the play itself is the foundation on which the house is built, and as I think I said in my first letter, I do not feel that the alterations will take much of your time. However that may be, I am always of the opinion that procrastination never brings any good results, and the sooner you and I have our meeting, the better it will be in every way.

With very best wishes, and cordial thanks for your interesting letter,

Yours very sincerely,

*Olga C. Galindo*

P. S. Naturally, although I do not leave my husband during the daytime, I will make an exception in your case and we can work together either in the morning or the afternoon.

C.G.

## Twain's Life To Make Play

Michigan Will Figure in  
Broadway Productions  
During the Fall

By Leonard E. Pearson

Detroit—AP—Michigan will figure indirectly in two Broadway productions this fall if early plans materialize.

They are "Mark Twain," a drama by a former Detroiter, Harold Sherman, and "I Confess," a play by William Beyer, director of the Detroit Federal theatre.

Sherman, who once worked on an automobile assembly line here, was selected by the Twain estate to write the stage, screen and radio versions of the life of the humorist. Harry Moses, who produced the successes, "The Old Maid" and "Grand Hotel," is preparing to offer "Mark Twain."

### In Episodic Form

This story, in episodic form, depicts the life of Samuel L. Clemens (Twain was his pseudonym), intermingling history, drama and humor in his biography. A portion of the play deals with Twain's romance with Olivia Lewis Langdon, whom he married, and contains sidelights on the lives of other members of the family.

These include Mrs. Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch, widow of Ossip Gabrilowitsch, the noted Detroit symphony conductor.

"Mark Twain" will be presented in 13 scenes by a cast of more than 60. The members of the cast have not been announced, but rehearsals are to begin within a few weeks.

"I Confess" had its premiere in Detroit, presented by the Federal Theatre group under the direction of Beyer, former Broadway and Hollywood playwright. Lee Shubert is arranging to produce it.

The play is a satire on the "True Confession" magazines. Plans to convert it into a commercial vehicle cancelled arrangements for WPA theatres to present it in New York, Los Angeles and Seattle.

The federal theatres pay nominal royalties to authors, but permit them to retain all rights to their works. When the federal groups are through with them or release them for commercial production, the playwrights themselves receive all royalties or payments for outright sale to stage, photoplay or radio producers.

Beyer has directed the several offerings of the Detroit Federal Theatre players, who now have "Let Freedom Ring" under preparation as their next presentation. Beyer gave up his other connections to aid the WPA enterprise here.

## Broadway to See Wolverine Plays

EX-WORKER IN AUTO ASSEMBLY LINE AUTHOR OF  
'MARK TWAIN.'

By LEONARD E. PEARSON

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### AUTHORS RETAIN RIGHTS

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FRED C. BROWN, MANAGER

"THE HAT CITY OF THE WORLD"

# Hotel Green

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

DANBURY, CONN.

Oct. 17, 1936.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Mrs. Gabrilowitsch is sailing for Europe the end of next week and writes:

"I can meet you and Mr. Sherman for an hour in New York on Friday the 23d of this month, if you will promise not to mention what fills my heart. I shall not see another soul in New York. I shall stop at the Biltmore."

Probably she has written you to the same effect, but possibly not, so I send along her message. The matter not to be mentioned I take to be her husband's death: and of course her presence in New York is to be kept strictly private. She probably wishes no one, not even her relatives or Mr. Lark to know of her passing through. If she does, we must let her notify them herself.

I shall go to New York pretty early and be at the Biltmore, in the lobby, around ten. Then we can get in touch with Mrs. Gabrilowitsch.

Sincerely,

*Albert B. Paine*



1428 No. Crescent Heights Blvd.  
Hollywood, California

November 6th, 1936

Dear Harold:

Thanks for your letter of the 4th, the contents of which is indeed encouraging.

I want to get down to brass tacks, so that in the negotiations pending with Metro, and which if necessary may follow with others at this end, I may be able to present my proposal in a concrete and absolute fashion. You know, I'm a stickler for doing things exactly. I like to present the whole of a proposition without entangling alliances and conditions precedent or subsequent to be performed. So with Mark Twain. It will be necessary for you to do the following forthwith:-

- A. Obtain a termination and release of your Dramatists Guild Contract with Moses. In this regard I do not feel it incumbent upon you to make any gesture for re-payment of the advance you heretofore received from him. He received something for his outlay and it is unfortunate that he was not to avail himself thereof. If any part of this advance was in the nature of a loan, then of course it is a horse of another color and it would be quite proper and fit for you to offer to secure for him the re-payment out of your share of the proceeds which you may derive from the sale of the play for picture production. If however you are still minded to make some re-payment to Moses, by way of friendly gesture, then I would say that you agree to give him \$1,000 from your share in the event of the sale.

Whatever you do, get a release, so that we may be certain in our overtures and not be required to call upon him for anything. Title so far as he is concerned, should be free and clear; otherwise we are liable to get stuck in more ways than one by Moses, who I might remind you, is a pretty shrewd business man and if occasion arose would seek any and all financial benefits which he could bargain for if he still had a hold on the play.

- B. Send me your contract with Moses and the release referred to in Subdivision A hereof.
- C. Send me your contract re: Mark Twain, entered into with the Clemmons estate, or a photostatic copy thereof.

Upon your compliance with the foregoing, I will know definitely where you stand, your rights and obligations with respect to the subject matter, and thus free you, as well as myself from any misunderstanding and embarrassment with which we might otherwise be confronted, now or later.

I am sending you herewith my personal check for \$100.00, as an additional loan. I hope things will happen so that you may come out here with me. However I am fully convinced that pending negotiations you are better off in New York. If and when the situation changes, either by the engagement of your services here, or because I feel that you could be immediately helpful, the plans may be altered.

As I told you while in New York, the contacts with Knopf in your behalf, as well as with others, were made by me through an agent, to whom we would be under the usual obligation upon any deal, either for your services or on the sale of Mark Twain, or both. As your personal representative and general business advisor (as distinguished from agent, because I have not and am not acting for you in any such capacity) my remuneration from you should be upon the basis of 10% of your earnings, incomes and proceeds, in lieu of any fixed fee, charge or compensation. After all, your Monroe has rendered service to you in the past, as he expects to in the future, as representative and advisor, and he should at least be entitled to some fair and adequate consideration.

I should also like to have your confirmation on the arrangement both with respect to the agent and to myself, so that this phase of the matter may be likewise cleared and understood.

There has been no word up to now. My answer to date was to wait until the early part of next week, but if Metro doesn't awaken then I shall proceed with my man at other studios. It must be obvious to you why I want to be patient with Metro. True, anyone can walk away from that spot, but it seems worth while to tarry a little longer.

With kindest regards and well wishes and awaiting your immediate advice, believe me

Yours very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'H. Sherman', written in a cursive style.

Mr. Harold Sherman  
City Club  
55 West 44th Street  
New York City, N.Y.

November 14, 1936.

Dear Monroe:

Two wonderfully fine letters in one from you today which has given me a much better understanding of the coast situation. Obviously, if you can put a deal through on Mark Twain, you should be able to get me started at a better salary for adaptation as well. I would treat Mark Twain's life much differently for the screen, working in episodes from his days on the Mississippi.

Mrs. Moses tells me that she would be glad to relinquish option on play if I could dispose of it elsewhere, since they can't cast it with actor they want for Twain. She'd like to get ~~their~~ option money back but the \$1500.00 was paid me in the regular way and I am not duty bound to return any part of it, if the option runs till December 15th, when it expires. If Moses does not produce the play, he loses an interest in all other rights. It's the regular Dramatist Guild contract arrangement.

In my contract with the Twain Estate, I was bound to pay the Estate, not through my own royalties but through arrangement with the stage producer, 1 1/2% of the gross up to \$15,000 and 2% over \$15,000. On the picture deal, the Estate must get a flat sum of \$15,000. Because Charles T. Lark, executor of the Estate, an attorney, turned over to me an invaluable collection of Twain's outstanding published and unpublished witticisms and remarks... which would have taken me a great amount of time to gather and much of which I would never have secured... which collection represented his own research of 25 years... I made an arrangement whereby he was to get 40% and I 60% of the moneys realized from the play, picture, etc. Of course this would have nothing to do with a writing job in addition to picture sale. On all other rights, stock, etc. the Estate was to get 1/6th of the sum I receive as author.

I talked with Lark yesterday. He has negotiated the sale of such stories as Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn and the Prince and the Pauper... and said, "when and if we get ready to sell picture rights, I can do that for you and save ten percent agent's fee." But I have made no arrangement with him to do so. I know he would rather see a stage play first... and I would, too, were that still possible... as I feel I may be forfitting a large amount of money, could a man like Otto Kruger or Frank Morgan or Lionel Barrymore still be made available for the role. But such chances are apparently remote... unless Metro's interest should take this form... as it might! (Explore this!)

With regard to your suggested arrangement with me, your services are acceptable on a ten percent basis and I herewith renew my statement of complete confidence in you and your handling of my picture affairs. (I don't know whether Lark will kick, if and when it comes to a sale to pictures, for 10% additional to be taken out for agent's fee as well as your 10%. We may have trouble on this score..with regard to money's due him. But I think it best not to raise this point at this stage of the game... and not to go to him until a real deal is on the line.)

As soon as I can afford it, I will have photostatic copies of the Twain contract made and also the Moses contract... and sent to you. At the moment, I haven't the dough.

As regards a release from Moses at this moment. I feel sure that he would not grant it unless I promised a return of the advance royalty in return for the release...and while I am certain he would not try to hold me up...he would take this stand just as a matter of business. For this reason, I think we'd better hold this action in abeyance until things take definite form on the coast.

I am enclosing a letter from Arthur Klein which came as a surprise. I had not heard from him in months. And before my "Twain" play was finished...last April, I believe, Klein took a detailed synopsis of it to the coast, along with a number of my plays. He believed he could get movie backing for the stage play. (This was during the time when I could not deal with Broadway producers due to new contract difficulties and boycott) Klein failed to get action and, not having given him any contract beyond a three weeks' option on the sale, I wrote him months ago, asking for return of my material. He has never returned it. My impression was, at the time, that Klein was a go-getter and a hustler. My suggestion is that you check up with him and the contacts he has made in my behalf...and tell him that you are handling my affairs and, if you are not tied yourself to one particular agent, it may be that you and Klein can get together on some of his contacts...if not for "Twain" for others of my plays which he has.

If not, you are hereby authorized to get from him the following copies of my scripts which he has:

"Some Do and Some Don't"  
"He Knew Her When"  
"Scrambled Hamlet"  
"Mark Twain" (synopsis)  
"Zaharoff" (synopsis)  
"The Love Match"

I gave him these scripts on March 5th...and if you'd rather not do business with him, get all the scripts so that you can place or submit them to advantage. The Zaharoff script should prove great for Muni very shortly as Zaharoff's death is expected momentarily and then this tremendous drama can be released.

I appreciate your proffer of an additional loan of \$100 and you can well know it would have been helpful here. I realize you have many demands made upon you and I know, if conditions clear up in a few days, you will do what you can. You've been swell throughout this most difficult period of my writing career...but I'm confident I'm going to fight through to much greater success.

Now about the Jack Pearl matter. I received your wire referring me to Bushel and Gottlieb and phoned to find that you had been so thoughtful to pave my way with a wire to them. An appointment was made by Mr. Gottlieb for me at 2:30. I was there promptly and waited close to two hours. At the end of that time, Mr. Gottlieb came out to meet me and said that he'd been tied up on an examination and could I come back again...Saturday. I got the impression that he considered this more or less as a charity case...and while he was nice to me, in the brief moment I saw him...since you can't be here to represent me, I hope you won't feel offended if I tell you I'd rather go to a lawyer friend who would be willing to undertake this matter on a contingency basis and who understands that you ordinarily

would handle my legal matters but for your absence from the scene. The most difficult phase of my experience of the past few months has been the feeling that I might be imposing on people...and when I wrote you about the Pearl episode, I didn't know whether you could give me some legal advice to follow from the coast or what might be done. I can see now that, if action is required, you could not render service from Hollywood...and I don't want to impose on you further through your law connections here. I intend to catch Pearl's second program on Monday night when the indications are that he'll "set" the new character of the Professor, following through much more definitely and obviously with my radio program idea.

Incidentally, my records show that I even gave to Klein, to take west, a copy of this Jack Pearl program. You might ask him for this also. He can be a witness to the fact that I gave him this program back in March...if I decide to do anything about it here.

Well, Monroe, I hope I run out the string of these stalemates and delays this coming week...and that I get the great word from you to "come out - all is forgiven!"

The letters I get from my dear wife in Michigan, whose faith in me has never wavered...are heartbreaking in ~~the~~ devotion and loyalty. I'm going to make good in a big way for a few of my friends who have stuck by me. What I have to undergo personally or physically means nothing... except as it might effect my business standing, if it goes too far...or if I should have to leave the Club. My only thought is for my family which has to suffer with me...when I know that I possess, in many properties already written, great earning potentialities.

My very, very best to you...and please keep me advised. It helps!

Sincerely,

ARS GRATIA ARTIS



**METRA-GOLDWYN-MAYER CORPORATION**

S T U D I O S  
C U L V E R ~ C I T Y  
CALIFORNIA

November 19  
1936

Mr. Monroe Goldstein  
8665 Sunset Boulevard  
Hollywood, California

Dear Mr. Goldstein:

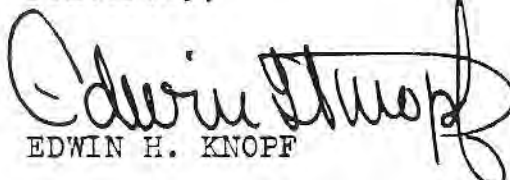
I read the playscript of Harold  
Sherman's "MARK TWAIN".

Of course Twain is a swell character  
and much of his charm comes through  
the pages of Mr. Sherman's script.  
I do not however think it is a pro-  
perty in which we would be interested  
at this time.

Of course I really read it with an  
eye to Mr. Sherman's writing talents.  
From the submitted script I should  
say they were considerable, and I  
hope in the not too distant future  
to be able to add Mr. Sherman to our  
staff. However there is nothing at  
the moment to which he could be assign-  
ed.

With kind regards.

Sincerely,

  
EDWIN H. KNOPF

EHK  
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L

FIFTY FIVE WEST FORTY FOURTH STREET  
NEW YORK CITY

November 24, 1936.

Dear Monroe:

Received your letter Sunday with enclosure from Knopf which is, as you say, encouraging. I am herewith returning it to you. I got the return receipt card back from the Klein letter today, not signed by him. I couldn't make out the signature...but the letter reached its destination evidently.

Henry Hull is available here and is reading the "Twain" play today. Brock Pemberton has shown renewed interest in it. Chester Brskine, director of "The Last Mile" and "Subway Express" is also greatly interested. The Louis Shurr office, now affiliated with Orsatti on the coast, (their Al Melnick whom I think you know, now out there in Orsatti office) put me in touch with Hull. Lester Shurr, Louie's brother has been wanting to get the play directly into Sam Goldwyn's hands, saying he had reason to believe that Goldwyn would advance the money for the stage production with Hull and later do the play as a picture with Huston or Hull. He has asked my permission to contact Goldwyn but I told him that you were working on my picture matters...and he then asked if Melnick would work with you on this one Goldwyn contact. He insisted they had the inside track and spoke of working out a commission arrangement with you. If you are not tied to one connection there and would like to explore this possibility, please let me know at once. I have reason to believe, with Hull available and Pemberton interested...if finances can be secured, we can get a Broadway production of Twain almost at once. Moses would relinquish his rights in the event I can work something out. Miss Dorothy Wolf originally acted as agent in the sale of play to Moses and also put me in touch with Pemberton. If deal went through here for stage production, presume she would have to be figured in on the play end...but you know what a real production of "Twain" could mean to me here...it would make all the difference in the world in red hot picture interest. Put your fertile mind to work and let's see if we can't put through something big in this direction. We've got all the ingredients now to build a million dollar proposition. Wish I knew someone who'd put \$50,000 behind stage play with Pemberton as producer. I think, with this piece of property, they'd get good return on their investment...and it would make my name for g&l time for stage and screen. It goes without saying, if you could negotiate this end, it would cut you into a nice situation in many ways.

I'm hanging on here, don't ask me how...and putting up the fight of a life time to crash through. If things ease for you in your own exchequer and you can help a little, it will be greatly appreciated. But I definitely feel that I am getting close to a number of good breaks after an arid period. And I know you're on the job for me every day out there...and won't let up until you've put me over.

Many, many thanks again for your fine efforts in my behalf. How happy I'll be when my turn will come to supply the "fruits" for your labors! Best wishes!



FIFTY FIVE WEST FORTY FOURTH STREET  
NEW YORK CITY

November 25, 1911

About "Mark Twain": Harry  
Moses, who was to have produced  
"Mark Twain" by Harold Sherman,  
former Detroit playwright, has re-  
covered from a long illness and he  
and his wife are planning to spend  
some time in California. Owing to  
inability to contract a suitable star  
for the name part, the production  
has been postponed indefinitely.  
However, there are indications that  
with Mr. Moses' consent, the play  
may yet be put on this season by  
another producer, negotiations be-  
ing under way at the moment.

Dearest:

The above address should look familiar by this time. It's five o'clock, almost Thanksgiving Eve...and Hebbert Farrar was just over from across the hall, in one of his melancholy moods, saying he didn't have anything to be thankful for...it would be a kindness if God would let him die, etc. How easily most people's perspective is clouded when trouble comes!

I still can't see what held up my letters. The airmail must have shut down for a day or so. I'm glad my birthday card made a hit. I'm indebted to you for keeping me advised on dates as I've had so much to think about here that my mind hasn't been much on special occasions.

You'll be amazed at this. Coming back from Lee's this morning, knowing that I would get a letter from you on the 10:30 a.m. mail and thinking about it, I suddenly got the hunch to stop at a newsstand and buy a copy of "Reader's Digest". I don't spend money these days for magazines or things that I don't need...and I wondered at my impulse but followed through. Imagine my surprise to come on down to the Club, with the Digest in my coat pocket, and getting your letter with the comment: "I chanced to read a little article in December Reader's Digest (one magazine we must take when we can)..." How's that for telepathy? And I'd never had even a copy of the Reader's Digest in my hands before!...Also, in this same issue was an article on Stanley and Livingstone...and I'd been holding off writing a synopsis of my dramatization idea on Livingstone until I could get more information on Stanley. This issue supplied it...so there must have been a double subconscious pull to this issue! (I'm operating as I'm accustomed to operating now anyway, as I mentioned in a previous letter) There ought to be real results soon to show for it. (About the article...it's the truth and I'm surprised, as I look back, that I was able to see it so clearly that going through college lost its appeal - save for athletic participation!??) This last is what the colleges are being run for at present anyhow!

I was in to see Mr. Frazer this afternoon. He said he knew several rich friends who might be interested in financing Twain and would be glad to approach them. As I talked to him, he said: "Sherman, you may be a swell writer but I think you're the greatest personal salesman I've ever met. How would you like to take charge of my sales force? What would your price be a year?" I thought for a minute and said, "Fifteen thousand." He said, "I'll talk to my partner Mr. Lang about you and see you next week. I've got a proposition in mind which will net you much more than that if you're interested in taking it."

What do you think? A good salaried job for awhile? I met Lang at Frazer's home on election night. I probably did the wise thing in going out there and dragging the old tuxedo out. Frazer has read my "Your Key to Happiness" and says his whole family's gotten much from it. Back to Lang, he's a personable young man about my age. (This paragraph takes the cake for jumping around...and you notice I specified Lang as "young".)

*Harry Moses*  
EMPIRE THEATRE · 1430 BROADWAY  
*New York*

DECEMBER 8, 1936

MR. HAROLD SHERMAN,  
CITY CLUB,  
WEST 44TH STREET,  
NEW YORK CITY.

DEAR MR. SHERMAN:

THIS IS YOUR NOTIFICATION THAT WE HEREBY RELEASE  
OUR OPTION ON THE PLAY "MARK TWAIN" ON WHICH WE  
BOUGHT AN OPTION ON JULY 15, 1936.

VERY TRULY YOURS,

*Elsa Moses*

*(Mrs. Harry Moses)*

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK

Counsellor At Law

527 Fifth Avenue  
New York City

January 20th, 1937

Mr. Harold M. Sherman  
City Club, 55 West 44th Street,  
New York City.

Dear Sherman:-

I had a chat with Mr. Loomis during which I told him of your plans and activities. In view of the physical disability of Mr. Moses, I told him that Mr. Moses had to surrender his option which has naturally put you in a bad spot just as casting was about to materlize.

It, therefore, seemed but fair that your request for an extension should be granted and I am writing, in behalf of the Clemens Trustees and the Mark Twain Company, to confirm the extension of your initial production date to January 1st, 1939, with corresponding lengthening of your movie and radio rights.

Wishing you every success, I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Charles T. Lark)

FIFTY FIVE WEST FORTY FOURTH STREET  
NEW YORK CITY

January 25, 1937.

AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN  
CHARLES E. WHITMORE AND HAROLD SHERMAN

It is hereby agreed by and between Charles E. Whitmore and Harold Sherman that Mr. Whitmore is to underwrite the living expenses of said Harold Sherman and family for a period of five months, commencing February 1st, 1937, to and including June of this year.

It is understood and agreed that these expenses are not to exceed a required payment by Mr. Whitmore of more than \$300.00 per month and that Harold Sherman is to give his best efforts to provide at least half of this amount as a result of his own earnings each month. But, in the event that his efforts do not bring a return for any said month, Mr. Whitmore is to furnish the additional \$150.00, constituting a total of \$300.00 per month.

For, and in consideration of this monetary service to Harold Sherman, Charles E. Whitmore is to receive in return seven percent (7%) of all net proceeds derived by Harold Sherman from any of his writings or earnings, for so long as Mr. Whitmore may live. This agreement, however, is to terminate with the death of Charles E. Whitmore.

Should business developments return to Harold Sherman such compensation for his services that he is not required to draw upon Charles E. Whitmore for the full amount of \$1500.00, such moneys as come to Harold Sherman will be credited to Charles Whitmore until said amount of \$1500.00 is realized between them when Mr. Whitmore will then be entitled to 7% of all Sherman's net proceeds from his writings. This is to say that Harold Sherman will be exempted from paying 7% on the joint raising of the \$1500.00 which, it is understood and agreed, purchases for Mr. Whitmore the 7% interest in Sherman's earnings beyond that sum.

The affixing of the signatures of Charles E. Whitmore and Harold Sherman to this agreement constitute a binding contract between them.

Charles E. Whitmore

Harold Sherman

April 11, 1937.

Dear Mrs. Gabrilowitsch:

This is a most tardy acknowledgement of your much appreciated note to me while abroad. At the time, I thought that a week or so's delay in answering you would enable me to give you some definite news as to the destiny of the "Mark Twain" play. You know, of course, that the serious illness of Harry Moses finally compelled him to surrender his option. Other producing interests, showing promise, have been held up because of the continued difficulty in securing the proper star.

Walter Huston had to get "Othello" out of his system before doing anything else...and then became so upset over the "roasting criticisms" he received, that he wanted no more to do with Broadway... else we might have obtained him for the part. There is new interest developing on the coast which I may be able to report to you in the next few weeks.

I am sorrowing today over the passing of Albert Bigelow Paine. I feel the loss as keenly as though I had known him for years. He was a great soul - only a great soul could have so intimately caught and reflected the character of your father in what to me is an inspired biography.

The last time I saw him was at lunch, at his invitation, in a little east side restaurant... and we sat and talked about "life after death"...a subject he brought up. He told me then that he felt Mark with him many times...that he had no doubt there was a hereafter... that he supposed he wasn't so very much longer for this world... but had no dread of going...in fact, he was "sort of looking forward to it". Well, Earth Time has touched him lightly on the forehead and a sweet lovable person who adored you...who worshipped your family...has slipped into the other life. "It's just a change of consciousness," he told me. "I can almost feel the new dimension at times...but the comprehension eludes me just at the moment of realization...as it does everyone else."

I have reflected many times upon the several hours I was privileged to spend with you, in the company of Mr. Paine. I said to you at the time that I felt we had much in common. I was impressed to find that you were seriously interested in the spiritual side of life...and when you returned to America, I phoned your hotel and left word that I had called, but perhaps you didn't feel physically like seeing anyone at that time.

In answer to your query, concerning the reading of my book, "Your Key to Happiness", in quest of the mental or psychic law which might enable you to contact other planes of consciousness... I want to say that this mental law - relaxation plus passivity plus fixation of attention - is the key. Practice in making your mind and body receptive can bring you impressions from outside sources...and

your telling me that you had experienced moments when you could almost feel the presence of loved ones...indicates that you have made progress.

I warned you when we met to beware of the fraudulent mediums, so much trickery is being employed in the name of spiritualism or so-called spirit communication. There are so many ways that intimate information may be secured and used to impress one...and in the hundreds of seances and psychic demonstrations I have attended, but a very small percentage produced, in my opinion, genuine phenomena. That's what led me to an attempt to discover and demonstrate these higher mental laws in my own life...to seek the proof through my own personal experience.

Next time we are privileged to meet, I should be glad to tell you some of these convincing experiences as an evidence that there is an existence beyond...that life does go on...that there is a plan behind this universe, despite the mad things that are going on in this outer world.

Why fate has kept the "Mark Twain" play from being produced thus far is something we will probably understand later. I think, without doubt, that the play will be done on Broadway this fall. It possesses a quality which can prove of great inspiration to the masses who need every inspirational example that can be presented.

Please be assured of my deep affection and regard for you. My long study and absorption of the Clemens' family atmosphere has tied me rather closely...has brought to me an inner feeling of warmth and understanding. I know too well what you are undergoing...the indescribable sense of loss which is yours...and the effort you are making toward readjustment. I'm impelled to say to you, for some reason, that you must pull yourself together physically and mentally... that you have an important work yet to do in this life...and that it will be revealed to you as soon as you have made yourself ready. This work, or opportunity for service to the world, will be given to you intuitionally. You will know, in an instant, the pathway that is yours to follow...and you will find new happiness in the knowledge that the inspiration to do this work came from what is termed "the other side of life...or another plane of consciousness". I have never written an impression to anyone before...and I hope you will pardon this sudden urge that is now upon me. You may be turning something over in your own mind at present. I have no way of knowing. But what I have just written, I am impressed, will mean something to you.

My heartiest good wishes for your health and contentment of mind.

Sincerely,

611 BOSTON BOULEVARD WEST  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

14. April 1937

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I was very glad to hear from you the other day, because I had begun to wonder what happened to the Mark Twain play. It is too bad you have had so much trouble with it, but that is the history of most plays, to be sure.

It was indeed shocking news to me when I read of Mr. Paine's death, in the paper. I had been looking forward to a talk with him in New York, sometime this Spring. It gives me a deserted feeling, as he was so close a link with my family. We corresponded during this last year a few times on the subject of the hereafter, and it was a pleasure to realize how much interest he took in the coming experience. For although he did not speak as if he expected to die immediately, it was evident that he was conscious the close of his life would not be far off.

I am indeed very anxious to see you and hear about the experiences you have had with spirits of the next world. For although I feel the presence of my beloved husband

almost continually, I know that this is largely because my mind is fixed on his personality as I knew it here. I can imagine what he would say about everything that I am doing or thinking and it is difficult to separate this fact from what might be a free projection of thought from his sphere of existence. But I have not tried what you suggest in your letter for establishing a connection. I plan to do so at once.

Indeed I have no inclination whatsoever to visit mediums or "séances" of any kind, because I know only too well how unreliable most of them are.

It is a strange thing that you are the third person who has written me of an important thing I have to do in life before I can join my dear friends over there, and in the same impressive tone that you use in your admonition to "pull yourself together". I have also myself distinctly felt that there must be some special reason why I have to lose all those, with one exception, who have been closely associated with me, and why I have to go on myself without them. I suppose, as you say, that the command will be given me as to what I am to do, when the moment has arrived. In the meantime I am making no plans for myself.

My daughter has entered a dramatic school in New York, and has been there two months already. I am living alone with the memories of the



past, which in many ways are uplifting. I have also started to write reminiscences of my husband which means, of course, a great deal of reading of letters that date back thirty years ago. This, as you know, is a long piece of work, but it is a comforting one to me.

I was only in New York a few hours when I returned from Europe, and never received any message from you at the Hotel Biltmore. As a matter of fact there were two or three letters sent there which I did not receive until many days later, when they were forwarded to Detroit.

When I go to New York in May (I do not yet know the date it will be), I sincerely hope to see you. Do not let any business out of town prevent our meeting!

I appreciate your expressions of affection, and am sure that we shall be very good friends.

With most cordial greetings,

Yours sincerely,

*Cara Fabrilówitz*

611 BOSTON BOULEVARD WEST  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

29. April 1937

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I expect to be in New York  
for a day or two early in May; in  
fact I arrive there on the 8th.  
Will you be in town at that time,  
and available for a spiritualistic  
conversation?

With best greetings,

Cordially yours,

*Cara Sabers*

May 1, 1937.

Dear Mrs. Gabrilowitsch:

I so much appreciated your fine letter to me and now your note advising that you will be in New York on the 3th.

Mrs. Sherman and I would be glad to set aside any evening you designate for your daughter and yourself to be our dinner guests.

We're most informal...and our apartment has the quiet and repose necessary for such a discussion as we will want to have.

I hope to have some interesting news relative to the "Mark Twain" play by the time you arrive.

You can reach us by phone - Monument 2-8695...our apartment house is at 116th Street.

It will be grand seeing you.

Warmest good wishes!

Sincerely,

611 BOSTON BOULEVARD WEST  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

5. May 1937

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Thank you very much for  
your kind invitation to dinner, which  
Nina and I accept with pleasure.

Would Monday evening be satisfactory?

I shall arrive in New York  
on Saturday morning and stop at the  
Hotel Salisbury, 123 West 57th Street,  
Circle 6-1300. Would you be so good  
as to telephone me there and let me  
know what time you and Mrs. Sherman  
wish us to come? I look forward with  
sincere pleasure to our meeting.

Yours cordially,

*Cara Jablonski*

May 15, 1937.

Dear Mrs. Gabrilowitsch:

I have written this accompanying personal letter, as you will see, in a vein which you might care to show to an interested party.

You will know best how well Henry Ford should be informed of my background before meeting...if you feel, upon a study of the enclosed material, that he would be vitally interested.

I have thought, for years, that he would be the one man who might endow a great institution to do a tremendous humanitarian job along lines that I would like to suggest...the only type of job which can save humanity.

Working in his own Highland Park Plant, back in 1919 and 1920...going in as an unskilled laborer and emerging as a minor executive in the Purchasing Department, I came to know and admire his methods.

Do you know that I have studied his life and that one of my ambitions is to DRAMATIZE THE LIFE OF HENRY FORD for a stage play...and later as a great motion picture? All the romance of the new transportation era is locked up in his life!

Oh, if this door could only be opened... what enormous possibilities are there!

My warmest regards and good wishes go out to you, in which Mrs. Sherman joins me.

I would gladly come to Detroit if the proper meeting could be arranged...the way prepared. If you thought it might be advisable for Mrs. Sherman and I both to come...and to meet Mr. and Mrs. Ford... whatever might be considered the best psychology by you...you have only to suggest. A crucial time in the history of the world is at hand...I'm appalled that nothing more constructive is being done about it!

Sincerely -

May 15, 1937.

Dear Mrs. Gabrilowitsch:

Upon returning home from our little tea party with you, Martha and I found our daughters in raptures of delight over a magnificent box of candy. It was so thoughtful of you...and so very much appreciated by us all! I am sure you will hear from the girls about it.

Now to the exciting things which Time would only permit us to touch upon. These have been a wonderful few days, with the privilege of getting better acquainted with Nina and yourself. Nina is such a fine person and we're all certain she is destined to bring real credit to herself in life.

I am deeply pleased to have discovered how very, very much we have in common - the mutuality of interests almost makes it seem as though we were meant to meet at this time that we might be of service to each other...to the end that we both might be of greater service to our country...and, I hope, the world.

Since a child, I have been conscious of a "work that I would have to do"...a work of world import...not for self-glorification but for selfless service to humanity. I have willingly served a really terrific apprenticeship, driven always on by an indescribable urge within me...something for which I can take no credit...this "drive" was born in me...I have seemed to know each step of preparation that I must take...and have been caused to take these successive steps, regardless of economic conditions and often at great commercial sacrifice...but the preparation HAD to be attained. And I was fortunate enough to have found the one girl in the world for me, in Martha Sherman, whose understanding and unfoldment parallels mine, so that we see eye to eye on each development. Without her co-operation and help, I could not have come this little way.

I have not tried to "force" conditions to come to pass. I have had to learn to cultivate almost super-normal patience and nerve control...to remain unmoved by setbacks, obstructions, disappointments, delays...secure in the knowledge and faith that, when the right Time was at hand, nothing could stop the right joining of forces for the Service to be rendered.

I feel now, at last, that this Time is imminent. And it is quite possible that you are destined to open this door for me...and for yourself...in a greater work than we now dream.

The pamphlet I enclose is a mere suggestion of the plan, carefully veiled that the real idea might be protected. There are so many vital phases that I could reveal to the proper person or persons. Great resources are necessary to the launching

of the right program...it costs money to be able to reach the consciousness of Americans in every walk of life...but it must be done...in the right manner...as quickly as humanly possible... else it will be too late.

To give you a hint as to the "real plan" behind the printed words in the pamphlet...I used an organization set-up known as "The Patriots", for illustrative purposes. Actually, I am convinced that no new organization, however well formed, can get anywhere with the destructive forces at work in the world today. The instant such a new organization "shows its head", these forces commence shooting at it and accomplish its downfall. The preparing of the consciousness of the masses to react against anything un-American must be done so simply and yet so effectively that the "opposition" becomes an unsuspecting accomplice...or is compelled to co-operate to avoid "showing its own hand".

Since the writing of this pamphlet, much that I foresaw has come to pass. Harry Barnhart, community song leader and band conductor, now has a 100 piece band, highly trained, ready for a nation-wide tour, which I am trying to arrange through securing a designation as the official "World's Fair Band"...and then letting it be sponsored by a great national advertiser. I think, within the next several weeks, that this title will have been obtained. Barnhart is a great soul, thoroughly conversant with what is coming...mentally and spiritually prepared to do an enormous job in influencing mass consciousness through the medium of music and song.

If the proper resources could be granted me to set up the type of creative program that I visualize...the whole SPIRIT of this country could be changed in SIX MONTHS to a YEAR'S TIME. We've got to take this country of ours out of the hands of our corrupt politicians and our destructive international financial group or America is doomed. We've got to awaken the drugged consciousness of our fellow-Americans...and this must be done NOW.

You may have in mind a man or men...or some influential women, who could subscribe to such a humanitarian project as is demanded by the present crisis. I should like the privilege of meeting such a person or persons at the earliest opportunity...and of having a quiet, confidential talk...discussing this plan in detail. It is my hope that a way and means may be unfolded whereby I can devote my developed talents for the rest of my life to this service. A great humanitarian institution needs to be formed...on an entirely new basis...which will inspire the confidence of humans of all classes. Such an institution could immortalize its founder and lift the life of the masses to a new level. Either this happens or an unspeakable cataclysm occurs.

There is nothing of the reformer in me, as such. One can't teach by preaching. But there is a new way to reach and to elevate human consciousness...a new and higher power which can be liberated... a method of bringing about genuine happiness in a world increasingly torn by strife and sorrow.

You are aware, I know, that my life hobby has been the study of mental phenomena...that I have broadcast, under radio sponsorship, talks on "how to operate your own mind...how to free yourself

of fears and worries...how to attain the things in life you most desire by learning how to draw upon a creative power which exists within your own mind." You have read, I believe, my published book on this subject, "Your Key to Happiness". And I have found, through thousands of letters written to me by radio listeners, how hungry they are for this knowledge of self...how effectively they can put this knowledge to work in their own lives. I have also discovered that "destructive forces" do not wish this sort of knowledge disseminated to the masses...it is serving to counteract the discordant and disordered type of thinking which is being fomented today, for a definite fiendish purpose. But resources should be provided by some far-seeing Americans to make possible the broadcasting of these truths, regardless of opposition.

That I might one day be equipped to reach the consciousness of humanity through every real medium of communication, I have obtained specialized experience in newspaper writing, advertising, publicity, juvenile writing, adult novel writing, radio writing and speaking, writing for motion pictures, play-writing, and article writing.

I have written more than fifty published sport and adventure books, half a dozen adult novels and some five hundred short stories. The books have sold more than three million copies... and many of these have been for the juvenile population. I am perhaps the outstanding writer for boys in the country today, most of my short juvenile stories appearing in BOYS LIFE, the Official Boy Scout publication. And it is in these young people that I am vitally interested...as well as the grown-ups...since their interests must be caught in the right manner and combined in a great new program of protective co-operation.

You know a little of what has occurred to me because of my attempt to dramatize the truth in the form of the motion picture, "ARE WE CIVILIZED?" clippings concerning which I am enclosing. Outstanding leaders in all walks of life claim that this picture should be shown free throughout America to public-spirited citizens of all ages...but foreign influence is so strong that censorship actually exists in this country at the present time. You can see from these press comments that the picture must have unusual merit, despite all attempts to suppress or discredit it. I should like to bring a print of the picture to Detroit, some time, and show to any responsible people you might wish to see it...it is made in 16 millimeter...and could be shown, with a portable sound machine, right in your own home.

I believe I am going to have some good news for you in a new production arrangement for the play I have been privileged to write around your father's life. I am to consider two different offers on "MARK TWAIN" this coming week. His life, dramatized, should prove of great inspirational influence to all humans at this time.

There is so very much that remains to be said on these subjects that I can only say now, once more, what a joy it has been to have been in your company...and how eagerly Mrs. Sherman and myself look forward to the possibility of a close association in the future. Thank you for your very fine interest...and may what is to come give us the opportunity to serve as we would wish. Sincerely -



September 1st,  
1937.  
7 P.M.

Mrs. Harry Moses,  
105 East 53rd St.,  
New York City.

Dear Elsa:

I was indoors writing all day today until late this afternoon when I went down to the City Club and learned that dear Harry Moses had passed away.

My mind and heart is with you now... as it was in those trying...I am affraid 'never-to-be-forgotten' days, weeks and months of last summer and fall...when we prayed and hoped and gave courage to one another.

I have missed my contacts with you this past half year as my struggle has continued. There has scarcely been a day that you have not been in my mind...and that I have not wished you and Harry well. And now, this crushing news, when I had heard from different friends of yours that Harry looked so well.

I, of course, do not know the particulars but I trust his passing was not attended by pain...this, in itself, would be a blessing.

You have the priceless memory of years spent with a great, good and grand person. There is sincere grief along Broadway tonight. Never have I heard one disparaging word against Harry Moses. Always have I heard him referred to in the highest and finest of terms...he touched my life so briefly...and yet he left his mark. I loved him...as I loved you...and your splendid interest in me...and it shall always be one of my major regrets that you were unable to produce "Mark Twain".

It is hard, yes - impossible - to comprehend the workings of Fate. But I know that your great spirit and courage will not falter...that you will find the urge to go on and pay tribute to Harry in the fine things you may do.

And, when your mind and heart can permit, I would like you to steal away for a restful evening with the Shermans - to meet the rest of my little family who are as devoted to you as am I. My phone number is Monument 2-8695. I would gladly call if I knew it would not impose at this time.

December 16, 1937.

Mr. Walter Brennan,  
% United Artists Studio,  
Hollywood, Cal.

Dear Mr. Brennan:

Some months ago, through the kindness of Herschel Williams, a copy of my "Mark Twain" script was submitted to you. Mr. Williams wrote me that he was asking you to communicate with me. Since this time I have not heard.

But now, my especial reason for writing is to tell you that Samuel Goldwyn has "Mark Twain" under consideration for a possible Broadway production. I have spoken to the New York office about you...and your having been recommended for the leading role. Since you are listed with the Goldwyn stars, it naturally occurred to me that this might prove an excellent tie-up all around.

Goldwyn's New York office suggested I write you, so that you could follow up on the staff interest at this time, having read the play yourself, and no doubt help to bring this situation to a head, with yourself considered for the "Twain" role.

I should appreciate some word from you. It is singular that so many theatrical people should have suggested you to me as one capable of giving a fine portrayal of the "Twain" character.

May I extend holiday greetings and best wishes for even greater successes in the New York!

Sincerely,

My address - 380 Riverside Drive, New York City.

December 19, 1937.

Dear Mrs. Gabrilowitch:

We have thought of you so very much and wished you well...and it has been my intention to write...but I have been under such creative pressure...and it has seemed as though, if I waited a bit longer I would have exciting news about "Mark Twain"...and so the time has gone.

You would have to be a part of the Sherman household for a time to realize how absorbed I have been from early morning to early morning. With conditions as uncertain as they are in every walk of life so that no plans can be counted on materializing on schedule, this has also complicated matters.

The play that Peter Arno optioned, written with Robert Garland and called, "You've Got Something There", still has not moved into rehearsal. There is talk now of selling direct to Metro for a picture. The rewritten Shubert production, "Honor Bright", done by Garland and I, has not been placed back in rehearsal due to a feud between the Shuberts and the original author, a Miss O'Harra, over who should be in the cast. "Recessional" difficulties have kept other plays of mine from being done...and things are much worse off than the general public has any concept.

This is not meant as a pessimistic lament...because I have never subscribed to such mental attitudes...but one has to recognize things as they are...and act accordingly.

Under such existing circumstances, to have sold "Mark Twain" for production again, its cost of production running around \$75,000, is no easy task. I have been close on several occasions but nothing has finally happened because each prospective producer has wanted to count on picture backing...and the picture companies, as I explained to you, have been boycotting American dramatists since the new Dramatists Guild contract prevented them from dictating what prices they wished to pay for film rights.

At present, however, the Samuel Goldwyn office is considering "Mark Twain" for Broadway production, Mr. Goldwyn being the only big producer who has not subscribed to this boycott...and something may come of this. (United Artists)

It is regrettable that we have not been able to spend more time together...and I hope the future may permit such association. I was glad of your report that you are having some very satisfactory experiences spiritually. There are so many worthwhile discoveries to be made in this field.

I am conducting a series of experiments with Sir Hubert Wilkins, arctic explorer, now in the far north - about to take-off on search flights for the lost Russian fliers. This is confidential, but since October 25th, I have been sitting on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday nights (from 11:30 to 12 midnight) to receive telepathic impressions from Wilkins, wherever he may be.

I sit in darkness of my study, notepad on desk in front of me...and receive these impressions either in the form of mental pictures or numerical figures or "feelings"...sometimes the impressions come as though I have previously been told certain facts and am trying to recall them.

Wilkins had arranged with me, before leaving, to try to send impressions of longitude and latitude...and also impressions of three different colors: white, indicating crew in good condition; black - death or serious injury; red, indefinite, serious but not fatal.

The idea behind these telepathic experiments was that, in the event Wilkins should be forced down in arctic and his wireless put out of commission, he could - if he survived - send me mental messages of his location and other information which might aid in his being found. In addition to this possible emergency service, the conditions were ideal for routine telepathic tests...distance proving beyond a doubt, were I successful in receiving accurate impressions...of genuine phenomena taking place.

With all my other work, you can now understand, three nights a week being reserved for these experiments...how busy I have been. I have made typed recordings of each night of impressions received, mailing one copy to Dr. Gardner Murphy of Columbia University who is studying this subject in association with Dr. Rhine of Duke. Dr. Murphy is checking these results. A close friend of Wilkins' and myself, Samuel Emery, is also receiving copies. Through Mr. Iversen, radio operator for the New York Times, we are checking with Wilkins in the arctic.

While he has been within reach of mail...at Winnipeg, Edmonton and at Aklavik, I have airmailed copies of each week's impressions and have received these copies back, with marginal notes opposite each impression.

The impressions have been accurate to an amazing degree... I have picked up, in addition to our simple agreed-upon signals... clear mental pictures of the highlights of his days...I described the hotel he was stopping in...told what floor his room was on... recorded most of a talk he gave at a breakfast luncheon...a ball he attended Armistice night, for which he had been loaned an "evening dress"... (I wrote down my impression he was in evening dress for this occasion, feeling with my Conscious mind, afterward, that this must be a wrong impression...although I could plainly see Wilkins wearing it. Wilkins wrote me that, while he had taken no evening dress on trip, his attendance at ball had been made possible by loan of evening dress by Lieutenant Governor)...I was able to pick up such little personal things as Wilkins being presented with a box of cigars on the very day that this occurred, etc...too detailed to relate here... except to give you an idea. Please keep this absolutely confidential as no publicity must get out about this work until it is finished. But I know your interest in these subjects...and that you may be heartened in your own efforts along this line. The key for such "repectivity" of mind is contained in my book...the law for gaining conscious control of your subconscious. We still intend to have Nina out...isn't it terrible...as much as we've wanted to see her...to have been delayed this long? The Shermans send love and cordial holiday wishes!

May 16, 1938.

Dear Mrs. Gabrilowitch:

I am as sorry, as I am sure you are, that you are not to be coming this way, as planned, prior to returning to California.

There are many interesting things which have happened that we would have enjoyed talking about. I am glad to have now, your private phone number, and have had twinges of regret every time I think of my inability to get this information from the telephone company. However, we'll make up for lost time and opportunity one of these days!

Again there is promising interest in "Mark Twain". I can see, if these were normal times we are experiencing, the play would have been done long ago - but it's high cost of production has been prohibitive for most producers. Yet, there is no other way, in my opinion, that a play, doing justice to "Mark Twain" could have been written.

Incidentally, NBC, over "CAF", several weeks ago, presented a dramatized half hour version of "Mark Twain" without authorization. I threatened to sue them and will do so yet if this presentation should be found to have interfered with a big deal now pending. I am supposed to hold the exclusive rights for radio, stage and screen. The way big advertising agencies and radio stations take liberties with the personal lives of deceased celebrities - on the ground that they are all in the "public domain" should be challenged some day. The "Twain" dramatization was incredibly bad. Wish I'd known about it enough ahead of time to have advised you. I only saw it in the radio program ten minutes before it was to go on - and phoned Mr. Park to ask if he knew anything about it. He said, "no, protest to NBC immediately, which I did - but too late for them to pull the show. Myers, NBC attorney, boasted to me, on our second meeting, that he had received a letter from one of the Harper officials, expressing delight in their fine version of "Twain". I think this letter was negotiated for their protection. Certainly no lover of "Twain" could have honestly endorsed such a presentation...no one who was sufficiently acquainted with his life and dramatic quality to be any judge.

Well - I've gone into a new phase of creative writing expression. I've done the lyrics of a popular song which is being introduced by Rudy Vallee on his regular Thursday night radio program, May 26th. The name of the song is "OLA - A Swedish Swing-Ola".. and if you are free that Thursday night, perhaps you will be interested in listening. I've finished five more popular songs which have been accepted and will soon be published....Please let me know your California address - and phone number - so we won't miss next time! The Shermans send their love and best wishes to you...and to Nina. Sincerely-

November 6, 1938.

Dear Mrs. Gabrilowitsch:

I owe you a profound apology for not having written you in so long - but few days have gone by that you have not been in my thoughts.

At times it has seemed as though the "Mark Twain" play would again be embarked upon a Broadway production career...but the upswing in business has not quite convinced financial investors that a play costing so much to produce is worth the risk. I should say "the lack of upswing in business".

There have been indications, on several occasions, that movie companies would pay a good price for the picture rights, and I wonder whether we should not forego Broadway production and consider a substantial offer? Of course my preference is still for having the play produced first since I believe it is predestined for success and it would mean much more money in the long run. Movie producers are maintaining their boycott of Broadway plays and will not put any money behind them, due to the Dramatists Guild contract which does not favor picture backing. This has reacted against the possible production of a play the size of "Mark Twain", running into a cost of \$75,000. There is rumored a coming settlement of the boycott situation, in which event I believe I would have Broadway offers for "Mark Twain" almost at once. And so, my quandary persists.

Recently, it was announced in the papers that Homer Croy was fashioning a "Twain scenario" which David O. Selznick was contemplating buying. Mr. Dark immediately sent Mr. Croy a letter stating that I held all rights for radio, screen and stage treatment, which notification I deeply appreciated. It is the tendency of the times for people to try to "horn in" on the rights of others, and I have seen a number of my ideas lifted, which nothing I could do but sue...and suing has its boomerangs.

I have been so pleased at the fine reviews your book, "My Husband Gabrilowitsch" is getting. I enclose two of them which you may have seen. This, must indeed have been a labor of love...and gratifying to you that your tribute to him has been so well received.

Cosmopolitan Magazine is finally definitely publishing the story of my telepathic experiments with Wilkins in the February issue, out January 1st. I may come west a little later, so if you are to continue residence there, please let me know. Mrs. Sherman and I send our love and best wishes to Nina and yourself. Sincerely,

December 18, 1938.

Dear Clara:

Forgive me for not answering your fine notes earlier - but things have been happening with almost bewildering rapidity since you left.

First, Martha's mother died suddenly in Traverse City, Michigan, following an operation for supposedly gall bladder trouble, which was found to be cancer of the liver. Ether pneumonia was the complication...and, of course, there was eventually no hope anyway. She was spared much suffering. Martha is in Traverse City over Christmas, to be with her father until he can get himself adjusted. Though we believe that destiny rules in the lives of individual souls, yet it is always hard to surrender them to the after life.

Mr. Harrison made a special trip to Virginia Beach to get a reading from Mr. Cayce and asked several questions concerning you and your relation to the service we have in mind rendering. He has given me permission to quote from the reading:

Question: Is Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch a divinely led contact for the public work of the new editorial policy in which I am engaged?

Cayce: As we find, one through whom there is to be the leading TO the ones who would be, as it were, divinely sent...and thus the factor, the channel, the door to same.

Question: Is it effective to pursue the adequate financing of the new publications, Savings Bank Journal and Labor's Capital, through John D. Rockefeller or some other public-spirited individuals.

Cayce: This is well to pursue through such channels - and that of the Rockefeller will be the part of such aid.

I am wondering whether you have had your life reading from Cayce as yet? I will be most interested to know how it comes out.

I have now become the editor of the Savings Bank Journal and am at work on the January issue, a copy of which I will send you when it is off the press. We have been put in touch with a group, also inspired, who are planning a magazine entitled: LEADERSHIP...and it looks as though this would become the other point of the triangle in the great editorial job we are to do.

My program, "MYSTERIES OF THE MIND", presented over WOR and Mutual network stations each Monday night, ~~beginning~~ at 10 p.m. EST, is drawing hundreds of letters...I hope your radio is powerful enough to bring WOR in direct...then you can be sure of getting it.

Other projects are rolling in now...and interest is being expressed again in "MARK TWAIN". All good things are coming to pass after a long barren period...and I think things have been held in abeyance for a divine cause until the right time.

So many thoughts I could express to you did I have the time.

Congratulations on the continued fine reception your book is getting!

Love and best wishes!

Sincerely,



611 BOSTON BOULEVARD WEST  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

39-29

3. February 1939

My dear Harold:

I am greatly relieved by your letter. It was difficult for me to understand how you could have prepared that cheap production, and I only explained it on the ground of "too many irons in the fire". The script which was to be used was never sent me. There was a partial sketch which came two or three days before the broadcast was to take place, with a letter saying that Mr. Lark had made changes, and that the script including them was not available at the moment, or words to that effect. There was not time for me to do anything except to wire that my mother never addressed my father as "Mark". I think now that I should have stopped the performance entirely, even if it resulted in some sort of a suit, for it is a crime to have the memory of a great man profaned to such a degree.

Since writing my letter to Mr. Lark I have been asked by two or three people whether the script had been submitted to me beforehand, and when I said "no" they freely expressed their adverse criticism. Just why Mr. Lark finds it necessary to exclude me from these matters is difficult to discover. But I am making an effort to prevent this in future.

Harold  
3. Feb. 1939

It also had seemed strange to me that considering you and I were in correspondence, you had not mentioned your preparing any Mark Twain broadcast. I was waiting first to hear what Mr. Lark had to say <sup>before writing you,</sup> in the matter. I have not as yet, however, received any reply to my letter to him.

In case it seemed to be wise to make a Mark Twain picture, would this mean that the Broadway play could not ever be used? Why could not a legitimate play follow a picture? I know it is usually done the other way around, but I don't see why it has to be.

How on earth do you accomplish all the work you do, and I trust you are not wearing yourself out.

With all kinds of good wishes, and my love to you all,

Yours ever cordially,

*Clara*

*I am of course greatly interested in all the fine things you are doing.*

February 7, 1939.

39-33

Mr. Charles T. Lark,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City.

Dear Mr. Lark:

Here are my copies of the two letters written to Clara. When your secretary has made copies, will you please have these returned to me for my files?

When the "smoke" has blown over, will you be so good as to write me another letter, extending my rights, as before, (in the letter of yours I left with you,) until January 1, 1940? Dating this new letter back to sometime in December, 1938.

The extension of these rights granted in consideration of "the times and the fact that financial backing of picture companies for Broadway plays is still being withheld from Broadway producers and this has worked a hardship in the production plans for "Mark Twain" because of its heavy cost of production". (something to that effect)

Actually, this has been one of the greatest drawbacks to production - but the Dramatists Guild gives promise of healing this breach in the next few months and this development - the return of big picture money to the theatre - and the plans William Morris has in mind for getting "Mark Twain" launched as a play, augur well for future results. I need this extra time for protection of the values inherent in the play and any and all negotiations that may come up, of interest to the Estate and myself.

Thanks for your many kindnesses of the past. As I have said, if the Estate would rather permit picture consideration, without waiting on a Broadway production, I would be glad to act on such an authorization - but I still strongly feel - despite the long wait that has been enforced - the Estate has much more to gain financially, as well as myself...and in prestige for the name "Mark Twain", by holding off until circumstances permit Broadway production and a subsequent feature picture as an outgrowth.

Sincerely,

611 BOSTON BOULEVARD WEST  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

39-34

8. February 1939

My dear Harold:

Fortunately, my sense of humor is still alive, and I have had a long laugh over the terrific tempest in a teapot which I unintentionally caused. The fact is that I sometimes forget how violent words sound in a written letter that wear a moderate aspect in a personal conversation. You did not have to write that long letter in praise of Mr. Lark, for I have been aware for many years of his superior qualities, and have more than once expressed to him my great admiration of his capacities and faithful attention to the affairs of my father's estate. But no human being is quite infallible, and this is not the first time that I have been uninformed in matters that naturally should have been brought to my attention.

The impression that I got from the letter written me by the broadcasting people is quite different from the statement that Mr. Lark makes, and it was because of this letter that it seemed strange beyond words that I got no notification of the coming broadcast from Mr. Lark himself. In any case, even if he did not feel that it was

Harold  
8. Feb. '39  
p. 2

necessary for me to see the script in time to make suggestions regarding it, I fully realize that my expressions of disapproval to him were couched in magenta-colored language, which should rather have been a pale, sickly green. One can always, in practically all situations, turn the condemning finger back to one's own self, with a realization that the balanced center of rhythm has been forgotten in a momentary distortion of values.

As a matter of fact, of course, this incident does not stand quite alone by itself, but I think that already too much time and energy have been wasted on it; nor do I wish to express any further criticism of any kind in order to defend myself. It happened that a <sup>poor</sup> broadcast of my father's life was also made last year, of which I knew nothing until I heard it over the radio. But I did not even mention it to Mr. Lark, taking it for granted that he probably could not help it, which may truly be the case. Anyway, out of this whole affair one learns afresh that there is a right way and a wrong way to make complaints, and I unfortunately hopped on the streamliner that went straight to hell.

Harold  
8. Feb. '39  
p. 3

Thank you for the trouble you took to  
whitewash Mr. Lark's good name; and warm love  
to you and yours.

Ever cordially,

*Cara*

39-35

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

# WESTERN UNION

1201

SYMBOLS

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- NL = Night Letter
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The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

Received at 2801 Broadway, New York

1939 FEB 9 AM 10 28

NN40 27=GM DETROIT MICH 9 939A

HAROLD SHERMAN=

DELIVER 380 RIVERSIDE DR=

KINDLY KEEP MY LETTER TO YOU CONFIDENTIAL. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF I HAD SAID NOTHING AT ALL IN CRITICISM OF MR. LARK. WITH BEST GREETINGS.=

CLARA.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

39-44



22. February 1939

My dear Harold:

I shall be in New York between the 4th and 11th of March, and hope that you will call me up at the Dorset Hotel, one of those days. It would be nice if you and Martha could either lunch or dine with me, whichever is easiest for you.

With affectionate greetings,

Ever cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Carol', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.



611 BOSTON BOULEVARD WEST  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

39-54

30. May 1939

My dear Harold:

It occurred to me that it might be a good time to re-read your play, while the copies are not in use. As I said to you the other day, I lost the notes I had made on it, and although there may be plenty of occasions later to make alterations, it would be easier for me now to find time for a review of impressions I received on my first reading of your play.

Naturally, if this is in any way inconvenient for you, I will withdraw my suggestion.

It was, as always, a great and positive pleasure to see you and Martha.

I am, of course, looking forward to the arrival of the magazine, and offer my warm congratulations on all that you and Mr. Harrison are evidently accomplishing.

With much love to you all,

Yours affectionately,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Owen", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

39-55

June 8th, 1939

Dear Clara:

All available copies of "Mark Twain" are now in the hands of the William Morris Agency, who are most hopeful of consummating a big deal with the 20th Century Fox, which may involve production of the play on Broadway this Fall. It is rumored that the Dramatic Guild and the Motion Picture Producers are to get together soon so that picture money may be available for Broadway production. If this happens, I think the delay in getting our play presented will be overcome at once and we will be well repaid for our enforced waiting.

It is always a tonic to see you and Martha and I enjoyed every minute of our visit.

The big issue of the Savings Bank Journal is off the press today and a copy is going out to you under separate cover.

Please keep us advised as to your whereabouts because I may need to get in touch with you on short notice.

With deep affection and best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

HMS:STS

611 BOSTON BOULEVARD WEST  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

39-56

12. June 1939

My dear Harold:

The new Journal has only just arrived, and I look forward to perusing it at my first opportunity.

What you say about the Mark Twain play is quite exciting, provided this is no false alarm, and I imagine it isn't. Evidently the idea of putting ~~the play~~ <sup>on it</sup> on at the Fair has been given up, as you did not mention it in your letter. I suppose the Hollywood plan interfered with the other, and certainly to our advantage.

Have you or Martha read the biography of Milarepa? I am sure that you would both enjoy it enormously. He was, as you may know, one of the great spiritual scientists of Thibet. One always derives a bit of strength from that quarter of the world.

I leave for Hollywood on the first of July, and will stop there at:

Chateau Marmont,  
8221 Sunset Boulevard.

Don't lose this address, for I shall be there about

two months, unless something unexpected should  
bring me East again.

With lots of love, and endless good  
wishes to you both,

Yours cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Vera", is written above a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

3639-63

October 18, 1939.

Dear Clara:

Martha and I have thought of ...  
wished you mi ...  
talks wi ...  
coming up  
refreshed  
It's difficult to g  
spiritual side of life would bring them much quicker and  
more effectively to a solution of their own problems.

There has been intense picture interest once  
more in "Mark Twain" and Mr. Lark advised our setting the  
asking price for the picture rights at \$100,000. It will  
never pay to let this great piece of property go too  
cheaply and I appreciate your faith and confidence in  
standing by until the right development comes. I have  
reported all negotiations to Mr. Lark and emissaries  
of the picture companies interested may even have sounded  
you out or tried to, but I know you would simply refer them  
back to Mr. Lark so that they will not be able to "beat  
down" any price or work out a separate deal.

You see, if they could get you to sell the rights  
to even your "Life With Father" or a part of the biography  
of "Mark Twain", it would be letting them in through the  
back door to the whole property since only one great picture  
can be made of his life story.

Obviously, the picture treatment of any stage  
play produced on "Mark Twain" would be entirely different  
than the play. When the time comes, I will discuss my ideas  
with you on this and we can be sure that the best dramatic  
use is made of all material.

I am now under consideration by a group of  
financiers controlling \$40,000,000 who may set me up  
in business on Broadway to produce such plays of mine  
as I deem suitable to the stage at present. I am determined  
to accomplish our original dream of producing "Mark Twain"  
first on Broadway and I would like Nina to play the character  
of your own self in it. So let's be patient and know that the  
right time is coming for this play's presentation. I will keep  
you informed as definite things happen here relative to it.

starts at that time, over a nation-wide network. The program was presented during a driving rain storm and the dramatics behind the scene were beyond belief. Because I think you will be interested, I am having my office sending you a letter (copy) that Mr. Harrison wrote to a friend of Senator Wheeler's describing what took place...so that you can know what we had to contend against...and yet the affair went over - a thrilling success.

I leave soon for Montana to gather material for Wheeler's biography there. Keep your eyes on this man Wheeler. He is one of the great Americans and the kind of leader we need to take us out of this mess. He is looking as the great democratic dark horse candidate for the presidency.

I am three-quarters through with the writing of my own biography as it relates to "Adventures in the Realms of Mind", which Cosmopolitan wants to publish. I have been so busy editing the Journal, which has been developing in grand style, that I haven't had sufficient time for my own private writing.

I shall be interested to know what your own experiences have been, and how Nina is getting on. Don't let any of these Hollywood sharks take you for a ride!!! The woods are full of them out there, as I discovered, when on the scene. I met quite a number of real people, too, whom I number among my friends today.

Martha joins me in love and best wishes to Nina and yourself.

Sincerely,

40-27

July 18, 1940

Dear Clara: [Clemens]

As Martha wrote you several months ago, I had a narrow escape from becoming an angel or "something else" this past winter and have only recently begun to feel like myself.

Not having effected a transition from one life to another - I ~~will~~ accomplish a transition from one business to another - being now a member of this new advertising firm, in charge of radio.

And what I am writing particularly to report at the moment is definite interest in the "Mark Twain" play on the part of Eddie Dowling, who produced William Saroyan's Pulitzer prize winner, "The Time of Your Life" last season. Mr. Dowling is considering producing "Mark Twain" in association with the Theatre Guild. He is busy with the staging of another play this week and next but I expect to have some word for you reasonably soon on this development.

As you know, Broadway production of "Mark Twain" can mean much more in every way for all concerned than a sale direct to movies. For instance, the Liggott & Myers Tobacco Company are interested in dramatizing "Mark Twain's life" for a radio series, sponsored by Velvet Tobacco, but this would be unwise until the play is produced on Broadway. I have had several talks with their representatives.

I presume you have had much expressed interest in Hollywood in "Mark Twain" and many eager to do something about it. There are many who would like to tie in on such a valuable property. I could have sold the play for production several times but to people who would not have presented it with distinction - and such presentation will do no good either on the stage or in pictures.

Everything points to one of the finest Broadway seasons in years this fall. The war situation has created a "home market" and the chances of getting financing for a play the size of "Mark Twain" are greatly enhanced.

I have been asked a number of times to reduce the size of the "Mark Twain" play, making it much more economical to produce. Obviously some changes and condensations would be made upon production, but I have felt that your father was too outstanding a personage in too many ways to reduce his stature by not giving a well-rounded dramatic picture of him.

It took me a year and eight months to write this play - the most conscientious and painstaking effort of my writing career. It has been an inspiration to me to get to know you and to enjoy your friendship which I value so highly. I know, with the unfortunate demise of Harry Moses who originally bought "Mark Twain" for production, that it had been disappointing to you as it has been no less to me, that "Mark Twain" has not, as yet, been done on Broadway.

But the "right time" always appears if we do not try to force an issue - and I am confident that "Mark Twain" will reach Broadway this fall under competent management and bring to us the artistic as well as commercial success we have visualized.

I was interested in your report to Martha of your activities in Hollywood and hope you will tell me more about them. Despite the fact that the west has apparently claimed you for the time being, I think I am going to "start something" that may bring you back east for a visit anyway. What a thrill it will be to see "Mark Twain" properly produced on Broadway - and, when this happens, the picture interest which now exists, will be vastly increased - as well as the offers.

I told Martha I was writing you from the office and she asked me to send her love and best wishes to Nina and yourself, along with mine. Marcia is up in Michigan spending the summer with her grand-dad and family. Mary is still working in the store on Broadway. We are enjoying a cool summer in our apartment, eating many of our dinners on the little balcony overlooking the river. Who says living in New York in the summer is "hell"?

Hope this finds Nina and yourself well. I saw Dr. Wanderman the other night who asked about you and wished to be remembered next time I wrote you.

Sincerely,



40-28

**Casa Allegra**  
2005 La Brea Terrace  
Hollywood, California

7. August 1940

My dear Harold:

Thank you for your nice long letter which I can only answer very briefly just now, because I am tremendously pressed for time these days. The reason for this I will give you later on in a longer letter. But this morning I am merely writing to say that I am delighted that you are on the road to perfect health again, and that the nightmare of your illness can recede from your memory.

It is nice that you have hopes again for the production of the "M.T." play, and we will have to cross our fingers with a powerful incantation. I will answer one or two of the questions in your last letter in my next one. This note is just to let you see that I have not forgotten you and Martha, but on the contrary remember you both, as well as your children, with much love.

Yours cordially,

*Clara*

**WARNER BROS.**

BROADCASTING CORPORATION  
Subsidiary of Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.

PRESENTS

**WILLIAM  
FARNUM**

"The Adventures of Uncle Jimmy"

40-29

307 N. Norton Ave  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> 40

Dear Harold: - I wonder how you  
are and what has happened  
about "Mark Jordan".

Do you still own the  
rights to it etc. -

I am about right for it  
just now and possibly may  
be able to interest somebody  
out here - Will you drop me  
a line at your earliest convenience

Been from the Eddie Perrine  
has gone - what a pity -

Hope you are well and  
My best wishes as ever

Sincerely

Bill Farnum

Send me copy of play at once, please

DISTRIBUTED BY



**TELECAST CORPORATION OF AMERICA**

INCORPORATED

1509 CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD • HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.

40-30


**Casa Allegra**  
**2005 La Brea Terrace**  
**Hollywood, California**

24. September 1940

Dear Charles:

I thought you would probably want to make public denial of this statement since I imagine it to be false.

Cordially yours,



sitting through a lame film bill. ...  
 nights is also fretting producers, who pre-  
 such as to a full house. Past two weeks previews have been  
 such nights in houses that usually are packed but even a preview, auto and  
 cash giveaways weren't lure enough to fill more than half the seats.

**"VARIETY"** September 24, 1940  
**MARK TWAIN, his life, writings and fictional characters have assumed a**  
 sudden importance in the eyes of the picture makers. Two of them—  
 Walt Disney and Samuel Goldwyn—have registered Twain's name with the  
 Hays office as a potential film title. Disney, however, has first claim to the  
 Twain monicker, having defeated Goldwyn by a brief two hours. While Dis-  
 ney execs declined to discuss the matter yesterday, it is known that he has  
 been mulling the idea of a cartoon feature woven around Twain and his  
 humorous writings for some time. Should his experiment with the half-  
 cartoon, half-human action combination used in 'The Reluctant Dragon,'  
 now in the process of lensing and animation, succeed, it is understood he  
 might do a repeat on the style in his treating of Twain. Goldwyn, should  
 he go ahead with his plans, will cover Twain's life from boyhood to death.  
 It is expected that he will shortly assign writers to develop a yarn.

\* \* \*

**THREE production outfits, planning pictures based on the work-**  
 Brooklyn's kill-for-coin crime ring, leaders of which are now  
 bars either serving long sentences or facing tri-  
 illege of using the title, 'Murder, I'  
 New York World-Telegram rew-  
 activities of the underworld c-  
 other talker companies to th-  
 Columbia, which filed an  
 Warners followed sui-  
 all stands =  
 'trations

40-39

November 14<sup>th</sup> 1940.

Mr. Harold Sherman,  
c/o Room 1009,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City.

Dear Mr. Sherman:-

I have heretofore entered into an option agreement under which I am entitled to acquire, among other things, the right to produce a motion picture based upon or relating to the life of Samuel L. Clemens, (Mark Twain).

I hereby employ you for an unspecified period of time to render your services exclusively to me as a writer, along or in conjunction with others, to prepare material suitable for a screen play based upon or derived from such life of Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain).

Your services shall commence on the day following the date of the exercise by me of the option above referred to and shall continue thereafter until the completion by you of such services as I may require of you hereunder.

I agree to pay you for such services at the rate of \$500. per week for each full week during the term hereof in which your services are actually so rendered, payable on Wednesday of each week for services actually rendered up to and including the preceding Saturday. Services rendered for a fractional part of a week shall be compensated for on a pro rata basis. For

Mr. Harold Sherman - # 2

November 14<sup>th</sup> 1940.

purposes of such pro-ratios a week shall be deemed to consist of six days.

Your services shall be performed at such place or places as I shall require. Should I require you to come to Los Angeles from New York for the rendition of such services, I agree to pay you the sum of \$200. in lieu of transportation. In the event I require your services at any place other than New York or Los Angeles or the environs of either of said places, I agree to pay you reasonable travelling and living expenses to, in and from such other place or places.

You warrant that you are free to enter into this contract and are or, prior to the commencement of your services hereunder, will become a member in good standing of the Screen Writers Guild.

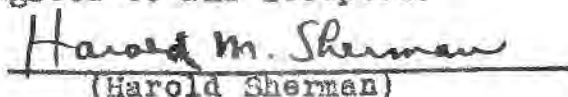
You agree that I may assign all or any part of my rights hereunder to any person, firm or corporation.

If this sets forth your understanding of our agreement please sign in the space below provided for your signature and this will then constitute our agreement to the above effect.

Very truly yours,

  
(Jesse L. Lasky)

Agreed to and accepted:

  
(Harold Sherman)

40-40

November 14 1940.

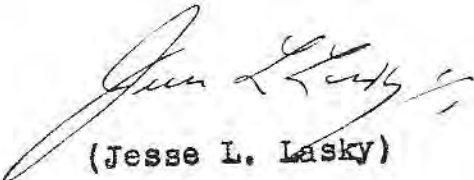
Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
Room 1009,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

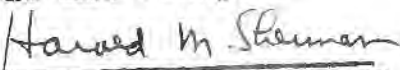
Notwithstanding the provisions of our employment agreement of November 14 1940, I agree that you may render your services as a radio writer on condition that the rendition of your services in such capacity shall not in my judgment interfere with the rendition of your services hereunder.

This amendment to our said agreement when signed by you will to the extent but only to the extent required by its terms modify our said agreement of November 14 1940.

Yours very truly

  
(Jesse L. Lasky)

Read and accepted

  
Harold M. Sherman  
Harold M. Sherman

40-42

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK

COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

November 15th, 1940.

Mr. Harold H. Sherman,  
380 Riverside Drive,  
New York City.

Dear Sherman:-

Re your repeated requests for further extension of your contract with the Mark Twain Company, in view of our conferences with Mr. Lasky and as the optional contract he asks for is to be made between you, Lasky and the Mark Twain Company, it is, of course, understood that your old contract shall be deemed extended to cover the term of any contract on Mark Twain's Life which may be made with Lasky - if we conclude such contract with him.

This is informal but it will cover you if I should cash in as I am not feeling too fit. This letter will be regarded as written you on behalf of the Trustees of the Estate of Samuel L. Clemens and the Mark Twain Company.

Yours faithfully,



(Charles T. Lark)

40-43

November 16, 1940.

Dear Charlie: *Whitmore*

I know it may have seemed as though I have neglected you recently...but I have not known exactly where you were part of the time...and when I learned from the hotel that you had gone back to Massachusetts, I had certain developments under way here which gave promise of providing good news from day to day...and which I waited to report. Now - at last - I have something definite to tell you that I am sure will do your heart good.

First, however, let me say how grieved we are as a family at the sorrow that has now come upon you. We read of Henry Whitmore's death in yesterday's Times and can appreciate that, after all you have gone through, this loss must seem almost inconsolable. Sam Emery asked me to express his sympathy, too, when writing.

Charlie - here is the news - I have sold the "Mark Twain" play to the movies...to Jesse L. Lasky. The contracts have been signed and Lasky has flown back to the coast, holding a two-week option in which to confirm the big deal by a substantial cash payment on December 1st. I have a separate writer deal to go to the coast and write the screen treatment of this big picture, and am assured either the famous director, Frank Capra, or Victor Fleming, to work with me. Perhaps Warners or Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer will be the studio connected with Lasky. THERE IS TO BE NO PUBLICITY ABOUT THIS UNTIL DEAL IS COMPLETELY SET...since Lasky hopes to take advantage of Mark Twain's birthday, November 30th, and fly to Hannibal, Missouri, with WALTER BRENNAN, who is to play the role of "MARK TWAIN", made up as that character...where Brennan will take part in a big birthday anniversary...and the announcement made from Twain's birthplace over a nationwide radio hookup, that the picture is to be done, etc. etc.

This deal, once it goes into action, will mean around \$200,000 within two years' time...about \$75,000 of which will be forthcoming to me...in addition to my writing salary.

Not only that - but I am expecting any day to learn that the Stone radio show is sold to a big commercial sponsor through NBC which will mean \$500 a week from this source...and, since I am scheduled to go to Hollywood by January 1st, the Stone show would be broadcast from there, so I can do movie and radio jobs at same time.



Also, the chances are good that Doubleday-Doran will take my book written with Sir Hubert Wilkins, called "Thoughts Through Space". Wilkins has written his first half of this book, 40,000 words...and has done an excellent job. I think I'll have action on this next week. They intend to feature it if they take it.

Getting back to the Stones - Lasky said I had a brilliant idea, bringing this family together, and that - once I sold the radio rights to their story - he would be interested in making a picture of it...so, with the Stones broadcasting from Hollywood...the sale of this same story they are presenting to pictures will be a cinch.

Charlie - all that I have dreamed of accomplishing for so many hard, bitter years, is going to come to pass in answer to my prayer...my earnest desire that it HAPPEN while my own dear mother...and friends like yourself...all of whom have had such faith in me...were still alive!...I have never sought achievement for the sake of so-called glory or fame...but as inner satisfaction for effort put forth...and as justification for the confidence and support given to me by those who have believed in me.

When these things that are under way now have progressed a little further...then I'll be able to sit down and work out a plan with you....I must not make the mistake of "paying all out" the moment a little money comes in - or I'll find myself in somewhat the same position I've been in several times before, which places such a strain on me that it affects my creative work and my health.

I'm sure, as a starter, that I'll be able to clean up this note in December...and when the picture is all before me, something else besides.

Please keep these matters confidential for the time being...and as soon as "the story can be told", I'll be in touch with you.

Perhaps this news will serve to lift your spirits... certainly it is an indication that both our futures can be happier and more secure. What you have done for myself and family will never be forgotten...and you can imagine my joy at being able soon to return in kind.

Now, keep your own self as well as you possibly can and accept the love and warm good wishes of all in the Sherman house.

Sincerely,

10-44

380 Riverside Drive,  
New York City.

November 16, 1940.

Mr. Charles T. Lark,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City.

Dear Mr. Lark:

This is to confirm our verbal understanding and agreement, that in return for your services in my writing and adapting of the "Mark Twain" life story for sound pictures, I am to pay you fifty percent (50%) of all moneys received by me as my share from the contract by and between Jesse L. Lasky, the Mark Twain Company, and myself.

I am also to pay you twenty-five percent (25%) of my writing salary, under separate contract to Jesse L. Lasky, which salary is to start at \$500.00 per week, covering my services in preparing the screen treatment and later the shooting script for the "Mark Twain" picture.

This same arrangement between us is to prevail on any future contracts for additional Mark Twain biographical pictures which may be made, or adaptations of his stories for the screen, through Jesse L. Lasky.

If the above agreement is in accordance with your understanding, your signature below will constitute a binding contract between us.

Signed Harold M. Sherman  
Harold M. Sherman

ACCEPTED Charles T. Lark  
Charles T. Lark

40-45

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# WESTERN UNION

1206-B

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FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

NBR 152 35 DL HOLLYWOOD CALIF 18 1234 P 1940 Nov.18 PM 4 47

CHARLES T. LARK

527 FIFTH AVE.

THIS CONFIRMS OUR UNDERSTANDING YOU HAVE RIGHT TO INSPECT BOOKS AS PER YOUR WIRE TO BRUINGTON. FORWARDING AMENDED CONTRACTS THIS WEEK. TELL SHERMAN I READ PLAY TWICE IT CONTAINS EXCELLENT MATERIAL REGARDS TO YOU BOTH.

JESSE L. LASKY.

40-46

November 20, 1940.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
181 Saltair Ave.,  
West Los Angeles, Cal.,

Dear Mr. Lasky:

I have read the shooting script  
of SERGEANT YORK with great care.

In my opinion the first half is  
extremely slow and talky while the second half  
can and probably will be, for the most part,  
terrific.

Too much dialogue is required to  
plant everything at the start and not enough  
action. It would seem to me that the scene which  
is related by Zeke on page 10, about York and his  
cronies "lettin' loose outside the church" should  
have been dramatized, with the provocation for  
York's "going off and getting drunk and raising Cain"  
being shown, rather than narrated through other  
characters. We would have been given a much more  
graphic understanding of York and been established  
on a more immediate sympathetic basis with him...  
then we see him ride into the hills and disappear for  
a time...and go back to Mrs. York's visit to the  
store, her worry over her son, etc. without having  
to give line after line of explanation.

This church sequence would have helped  
to plant Pastor Pile in the dual role of minister  
and proprietor of the general store more effectively...  
and the other town characters could have been brought  
excitedly into the picture after the "shootin'"...all  
making comments on Alvin's "goin' off on a bat ag'in".  
They could be examining the tree with the initials  
"A.Y." shot in it...and exclaiming at York's marksmanship,  
bemoaning the fact that he was such an unstable young man  
when he had so many good points, etc.

Direct opposition of Gracie Williams'  
father to him as well as trouble over the property he  
wished to buy, should have preceded the "blow-up"...which  
affords drama and introduces character delineation. These  
points, as you will see, are now covered largely by

dialogue rather than action.

I had to do a series of articles on the famous Edith Maxwell case - this girl who killed her father. Interviewing Edith and her brother gave me an insight into the ways and thoughts of these hill billy people. They don't reason so much...but they feel deeply...and their feelings must be shown in action. They have a stoic quality which the authors of your script have caught reasonably well, depicting as they do that Mother York and her son show few outward signs of their affection for one another, etc...

I think the authors have missed a bet by not getting more out of the unusual love story suggested...and I feel that the picture audience must get more understanding from the decision Alvin makes to go to war...If, after summing things up, he expressed his thoughts to Gracie - the anguish of his soul - and made up his mind at that time...and if a little closer contact could be kept to the spiritual side of his life - the inner conflict within him...at all times...your drama would be enhanced...

This picture should exert a powerful influence upon all peoples who are on the borderline within respect to fighting for their country...and serve to clarify much religious thought on this subject.

Thank you for your fine wire. I am glad you found the play, "MARK TWAIN" to contain much good material, as I know you would. I have many notes in my files which, within a few weeks, can provide the backbone for the screen treatment, upon which I have already given several years of thought.

Your books have been ordered and should be reaching you from Harpers within a few days. I am trusting that everything is working out on schedule and that I will be joining you the first of the year in Hollywood.

I cannot imagine a happier association than is promised through working with you...and I have also taken a strong liking to your Mr. Evans, with whom I had lunch yesterday, and your Mr. Bravington. I am sure, with the feeling you have for "Mark Twain", we can build it into one of the finest pictures ever made.

Best regards and good wishes!  
Sincerely -

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

10-47

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

November 23rd, 1940

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
Care of Mr. Charles T. Lark,  
527 Fifth Avenue, New York City, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I have been impatiently awaiting  
the following books:

- (a) MARK TWAIN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY - Pub. 1924 (2 Vols.)
- (b) MARK TWAIN'S SPEECHES - Pub. 1910 (1 Vol.) and 1923 (1 Vol.)
- (c) BIOGRAPHY OF MARK TWAIN - Albert Bigelow Paine (Four editions; one one volume, one two volumes, one three volumes, and one four volumes)
- (d) MARK TWAIN'S NOTEBOOKS - Edited by Albert Bigelow Paine
- (e) MARK TWAIN'S LETTERS - Edited by Albert Bigelow Paine

Possibly you have had these books shipped to me by this time, but if not, will you kindly have them sent on immediately.

I am also very anxious to see the two motion picture films made by Edison Company, containing shots of Mark Twain. I hope you can procure the prints and ship them to me.

I have had the opportunity of studying the play and found it extremely interesting. In spite of the handicaps imposed by the restrictions of a stage play, your dramatization of Mark Twain should convince anyone of the marvelous possibilities the material contains for a picture.

I have ordered four seats for you for the New Years Rose Bowl Game and as I will take my son and daughter with me, and our seats will be together, we should spend a very pleasant holiday - and we will want you and your family to dine with us after the Game and spend the evening at our home.

With kindest regards -

Cordially yours,

*Jesse L. Lasky*

**VITAPHONE**  
REGD. TRADE MARK

November 24, 1940.

Dear Ruby:

I suppose you have long since heard of my experiences with Danny Milner, how I met him on his trip here, and our visit to Father Divine. (Peace, Father!)

This is now to tell you that I have sold my MARK TWAIN play for a super feature to be made of it and am to come to Hollywood some time in February, or sooner, to do the treatment and shooting script. I cannot give you the details at present or the producer, since I am sworn to secrecy until the announcement is made...but Martha and the two daughters are enthused over prospects of going west to live...and wish me to write you to ask your advice on where to locate and what we may expect in the way of furnished homes.

I presume we will be able to pay up to \$300 a month (and Mary and Marcia, from reading reports of Hollywood, wonder if a swimming pool and, or tennis court, can be included in such rental, with also a thrilling view, etcetera!)

I do not know how long we will be in Hollywood but presume it will be six months at least and quite possibly a year...or this may result in our making what amounts to a permanent residence there. By Hollywood, I do not mean that we wish to locate in that city...and I cannot tell you yet which studio this picture will be made at...but my writing can be done at home, so this would not be a serious factor in locating - except when the picture was actually being shot.

We are decided that we wish a home rather than an apartment...a home with a yard and the chance to enjoy the out-of-doors. We like privacy - so if the home atmosphere has some seclusion to it, so much the better. We need eight rooms - four bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen and study. (Maid's quarters available - are most of them in the house or over the garages out there? We would need a two-car garage.)

Now, if this is not a burden to you, I would appreciate your giving Martha and me such information as you can at this stage...and such advice as would be

helpful. I am presuming that you and Doug have a pretty good knowledge of such things.

This may seem like an easterner's over-cautious whim...but doesn't a person have to consider two things - locating where he will not be affected in the event of floods...or too seriously endangered in the event of a sizeable earthquake? For instance, I heard while in Hollywood, that a certain section of the city was in a direct line with the reservoir which could pour volumes of water on the city if a real earthquake hit...and I certainly was west when floods did great damage.

I would like to locate in an area as free of fogs as possible...and of those other disturbing hazards. My adventurous spirit might wish to observe the phenomena of an earthquake, if I should have to be west when a hard one hit...but I would want to be situated where the chances would be best for "riding it out" with least obvious damage.

Outside of that - I don't know what would be the most desirable residential place...but we intend to motor through and stop at a hotel (is the Roosevelt the best for us - and how expensive?) until Martha and I can look at a few places and make a selection of where we want to live.

Oh, yes - we should live not too far from a good grade and junior highschool for Marcia who is eleven. (Grade school most important now)

Ruby - maybe I'll get a chance to do something nice for you some day. I hope that things are very much better for your whole family. I still remember your kindnesses to me when I was west...and am looking forward to seeing you all again when we arrive. We are putting our furniture in storage here and giving up our apartment when the word comes from Hollywood as to the exact time that I am wanted out there.

Please give my best regards to Doug...and accept same for yourself, in which Martha joins me.

Sincerely,



Monday - November 25th, 1940

40-49

Dear Harold:

Please forgive this pencil - it's the only thing I can use on this plane. I felt rather badly that I couldn't reach you before leaving New York. Hope you received my message and the script at the City Club.

Regarding the script. I think, from our conversations, you would prefer my utter frankness to false compliments. Several things - such as the scene with the colored man in the chamber, etc. are excellent - but had I not read the book, am afraid the play would have been just another Berkeley Square in effect. It still lacks the breadth of vision that inspired Bellamy. Am sure that, with this as a foundation, you can begin giving the play its necessary importance.

You remember one of your criticisms of Sergeant York - that too many things in the early part are talked about instead of happening? - the same is true in this script. It retains a narrative style - with the exception of several amusing scenes in the beginning.

In the first place, the opening shouldn't talk about strikes, etc. We should find Julian desperately trying to use logic with some representatives of labor. Only anger and frustration come as a result of his arguments, at which point his fiancée enters. Her father, by the way, should do more than talk about conditions, etc. We should be in a position to go to the 'phone and order the strikers to be locked out and starved until they come to their senses. The turbulent unrest and strife in these opening scenes must be in striking contrast to the sense of order and relaxed living in year 2000. As it is now, it's mostly talk in each case.

I like the introduction of the new character, Carl, but he too must be an active representative of the year 2000, not just mentioned as being in charge of something or other.

Although your device of using television is very effective, it shouldn't be relied upon to give the entire picture of life in 2000. Julian's walk thru the streets - with surprising results revealed thru clever progressive movements (which can be designed by a brilliant scenic artist) - would intrigue the audience and be much more dramatic than looking entirely at television pictures for the general effect desired.

This could go on indefinitely, but I think it would be better to wait until you come west, at which time we can discuss it all in greater detail. Basically, you've done an enormous piece of work and now must come the tribulations of perfecting it!

We were supposed to arrive in L.A. yesterday morning - thus far we've been grounded two nights at hotels en route, but we're still hoping.

Best,

*Julius*

7440 Woodrow Wilson Drive  
Hollywood, California

Note: Tapped out this letter - so you'd be able to decipher what I wrote on the plane -  
410 0 2 15. letter done here

November 27, 1940.

Mr. Walter Bruington,  
8584 Sunset Blvd.,  
Los Angeles, Cal.,

Dear Mr. Bruington:

I learned today that Miss Starr, Mr. Lark's secretary, had mailed the letter, returning ~~me~~ the check, to you in care of Warner Brothers without specifying Mr. Lasky's office, and thinking that it might not fall directly into your hands, followed up with a wire of inquiry to see if received by you.

Mr. Lark will have returned from Buffalo either tomorrow or the day after when we will execute the extension of the option and get papers back to you.

I would like nothing better than to be on the west coast by January 1st, now that I am giving my whole mind and attention to the treatment of MARK TWAIN, even in advance of the starting date of my salary. I appreciate the courtesy of Mr. Lasky in making such advance payment of the first week's salary. As I explained to him, ~~it~~ will be necessary for the contract to be consummated and the first payment of \$25,000 made before I can justifiably assume the expenses incident to storing furniture, leaving this apartment, buying a car, etc. in order to transfer my family and self to the coast. Should this occur in the near future, I will be able to arrive on the proposed schedule... otherwise, I will continue my work here for the time being.

As I get into the material I have compiled over the past few years and re-read and refresh my memory - I see clearly that there are at least four great pictures in MARK TWAIN'S life. I see them under the following titles and possibly in the following order:

1. "MARK TWAIN"
2. "MARK TWAIN ON THE MISSISSIPPI"
3. "AROUND THE WORLD WITH MARK TWAIN"
4. "THE BOY, MARK TWAIN"

And then, a delightful, astonishing fantasy, based upon Mark Twain's observations and attitudes which are as applicable today as they were in the time he lived: "YE MARK TWAIN RETURNS TO EARTH!" An ingenious use of his comments upon world affairs, his imaginary meetings with the peoples of our day, his concern over the happenings, his interest in humanity...and MARK, in this fantasy, returns to earth at the time a NEW COMET appears in the heavens. (But this last suggested picture is far, far in the future, comparatively - IF it could be done! It would demonstrate, however, the immortality of the man and why what he has said and written LIVES, much of it, and will live, forever!)

A tremendously successful first picture - covering the basic story of MARK TWAIN'S life - can lay the groundwork in public interest for those to follow... with a ready-made audience waiting, eager for more. I think both you and Mr. Lasky, as pleased as you may be now over the prospects, are going to be excited beyond measure when I have my work a little further along and can show you what I have in mind.

Pictures have proven that the public cannot get enough of a lovable character, if the stories that present him are sufficiently strong and appealing. Here is a rare instance where the subject matter is so powerful, so rich in humor and drama, that interest can be sustained.

You might show these comments to Mr. Lasky if you will. As I have stated to him, I am so happy he has seen such evidence of the dramatic possibility in Twain, as indicated by the stage play, which I have felt, though purposely over-written, would be most effective in its own right. Of course, the screen, with its broad scope, is the most perfect medium.

Thank you again for your kindnesses and consideration. I shall await further advices from you.

With all good wishes to Mr. Lasky and yourself,  
I am - Sincerely -

40-51



# Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation

STUDIOS  
BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

November 28, 1940

Dear Harold:

What exciting news! And all because of Mark Twain, bless him.

Without any checking, I believe your housing problem will be a simple one. The swimming pool is perhaps out at that price.

Brentwood (that's where we used to live) has many lovely homes at fairly reasonable prices, but the fogs may be objectionable to you.

Beverly Hills is good but the schools are impossible. There are so many ill mannered children of the too-rich-too-quick type that the teachers are treated more like servants than instructors.

Westwood, I believe, is your best bet. That's about two miles west of Beverly Hills. It's not as damp as Brentwood and some portions are entirely free of fog. The university is located there and it is really very beautiful.

The section you mention as being in a direct line with the reservoir is really Hollywood proper. You wouldn't want to live there, anyway, but the reservoir is kept about half full and isn't really considered a hazard. The old river bed runs down through Hollywood, Carthay Circle, Culver City, and on to the sea. That's why.

As for earthquakes, you know Los Angeles and vicinity is located directly on the main fault and we have small quakes frequently. Believe me, even the worst quake isn't to be compared with the blizzards and electric storms I've experienced in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Any floods we have had here are due to improper drainage. The local government has been too involved in corruption and graft - but, thanks be, the federal government has practically erased any flood dangers by their various projects. Anyway, an earthquake is about the most thrilling thing imaginable.

The Roosevelt Hotel is a central location, considering Universal, Warner Brothers, RKO, Paramount, or even Goldwyns -- but it's quite a distance to MGM or Twentieth Century-Fox. Their rates run all the way from \$3.00 to \$6.00 (and up) per day per room, depending upon the location and size of the rooms. Three

connecting rooms (1 large double room and two smaller ones) could be had for \$22.00 per day. They also have housekeeping suites with one and two bedrooms, small kitchen, dinette and living room. With two bedrooms - \$16.00 per day. This, you know is located on Hollywood Blvd. It's a good hotel but not as good as when you were here, since Hollywood Blvd. is a bit down at the heels. The shops are tawdry and the city has grown west by leaps and bounds. It seems a shame to introduce your family, on their first visit, to this section, even though the hotel is a good one. You see, I'm protecting the investment of keeping you and yours here, if possible.

In my opinion, you'd be better off at the Garden of Allah Hotel, 8152 Sunset Blvd. It's within a short hop to any studio and is considered very good. Their rates are much better for what you receive. The hotel is comprised of bungalows that rent for \$185.00 and up per month. One bedroom bungalow is \$9.00 per day and a two bedroom bungalow is \$12.00 per day, etc. Many of the picture colony live there the year around. The service is excellent, it's quiet and considered among the best. Eddie Carewe lived there once (between marriages) and at a time when the best was none too good. I'd be glad to check on it, and others, before your arrival and make reservations for you.

Don't be silly and assume that it would be a bother to check houses for you. It would be a pleasure. If you will let me know about two weeks before your arrival, I can have several of the best lined up for you to look at. Perhaps by that time you will be able to designate the studio and centralize the location. Of course, you know I'm practically consumed with curiosity, but I'll ask no questions that can't be answered.

At any rate, we'll look around over Saturday and Sunday and get a really concrete idea of what you can get within that price. Perhaps we'll find a swimming pool for Mary and Marcia not out of the question.

I've not heard of your experiences with Danny Miller and Father Divine. I did read some correspondence Danny had with the Father before he left here. Judging from that, I can imagine you have sundry and tall stories to tell.

This is written between events at the studio, and it must sound very rambling. Believe me, it's not rambling for the same reasons it would have rambled a few years back. We all have our feet pretty well planted and our minds concerned with more pleasant matters.

Doug joins me in the very best to you and yours. Please assure Martha that she is among friends and nothing is an inconvenience. Mother loves to ride around the city, and houses have a certain fascination for me. I think I should have been an architect. We've been looking for a place to buy, so we'll combine missions.

Sincerely,



# WESTERN UNION

grams referred to indicated by a suitable sign above or preceding the address.

H. B. WHITE  
PRESIDENT

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NM - Night Message
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Ship Radiogram

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### Received at

ND246 207 ~~DLC 1/150~~ WESTHOLLYWOOD CALIF 30 <sup>940</sup> ~~223~~ <sup>NOV 31</sup> 30 PM 6 30

HAROLD M SHERMAN=

APT 8 A 380 RIVERSIDE DRIVE=

40-52

THE FOLLOWING IS COPY OF WIRE FORWARDED TO MR LARK TODAY.  
 QUOTE THIS CONFIRMS MUTUAL AGREEMENT THAT MR LASKYS TIME  
 TO EXERCISE OPTION OF ACQUIRE RIGHTS UNDER AGREEMENT OF  
 NOVEMBER THIRTEENTH WITH SHERMAN AND MARK TWAIN COMPANY  
 EXTENDED TO AND INCLUDING JANUARY TWENTY FIFTH AS REQUESTED  
 IN LETTER TO SHERMAN DATED NOVEMBER TWENTY THIRD AND UNDER  
 TERMS OF OPTION EXTENSION AGREEMENT THEREWITH ENCLOSED.  
 WE APPRECIATE YOUR HAVING CONFIRMED ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS  
 OF EXTENSION AGREEMENT IN SPITE OF PRIOR MISUNDERSTANDING  
 REGARDING THEM.

I SUGGESTED CHANGES IN BASIC AGREEMENT NOT ENTIRELY  
 CLEAR TO ME OUT WILL BE IN A POSITION TO DISCUSSFULLY ATER  
 RECEIPT OF LETTER REFERRED TO IN YOUR WIRE WHICH NO DOUBT  
 SETS THEM FORTH IN DETAIL. MR LASKY PERFECTLY WILLING TO  
 MAKE ANY REASONABLE CHANGES IN BASIC AGREEMENT IN YOUR FAVO  
 AS I AM SURE YOU ARE WILLING TO MAKE REASONABLE CHANGES  
 IN HIS FAVOR WHEREVER EITHER IS NECESSARY=

END 1=

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

40-53

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

December 2nd, 1940

Mr. Harold L. Sherman,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Just a few lines to let you know the Mark Twain books have arrived and will afford me plenty of reading for sometime to come.

I am also in receipt of your letter of November 25th and realize that your attending the Rose Bowl game naturally depends on just how soon I can take up the option. It may well be that the option cannot be exercised in time for you to reach here by New Years Day. In that event, we will have the little family gathering at a later date.

Inasmuch as you are not on salary, I urge you to devote as much time as possible to the preliminary treatment of the Mark Twain story. I hope you will start with his birth, simultaneously with the appearance of Haley's Comet, which scene you described so effectively to me - and, of course, end with the death scene, as suggested in your play, which I thought very fine indeed.

To get the full effect of your fine ending, you will undoubtedly want to show an episode in Mark's boyhood days, with Tom and Huck, so as to establish the great friendship of the three. It is these youthful figures of Tom and Huck that I see as spirits beckoning to the older Twain to hurry up and join them in the ending of the picture.

I imagine you will probably select and assemble in chronological order the most interesting, colorful, humorous and dramatic incidents in Twain's life, and with that material as a groundwork, start to dramatize it in the treatment for the screen.

I would not worry about length in this first treatment. The cutting and editing will take care of this factor after we have had a chance to evaluate the material.

The more I think of it, the more I realize what a difficult job you tackled in dramatizing Mark Twain's life. If you could do such an effective job for the medium of the stage, I

feel you will literally soar when you start thinking in the more flexible medium of the screen. As you may gather, from the above, my enthusiasm for our Twain picture is unbounded.

In order that everything shall be right for us, I am moving very slowly in my negotiations with the studios. So far, confidentially, I think Warner Bros. are eliminated. They have not had much financial success with their recent biographical pictures, and when they started to compare Twain with the other biographies they have done, and without any particular enthusiasm for the proposed Twain picture, I decided to eliminate them from my plans.

When the option is exercised, we will want to handle the announcement in a very important manner. I have been giving some thought to having the first announcement made in New York by the Mark Twain Estate through Mr. Lark. We would, of course, arrange from this end for the Associated Press and other news agencies and correspondents to meet in Mr. Lark's office.

This first announcement would cover the fact that after rejecting for many years all film offers for the Life of Mark Twain, I have been selected and given the much sought after prize, as the one best qualified to produce this important picture. The announcement would include the fact that you are already at work on the story and that scenes from the unproduced play by you are to be included in the picture. The very next day we would make the second announcement from Hollywood in which we would name the company and studio at which the picture is to be made, and other details - possibly the star and director.

This is all very tentative in my mind - I was just trying to give you a glimpse of how my mind is working.

I was sorry I could not get things organized in time to make the birthday announcement from Hannibal last Saturday but it would have been fatal to our interests to have attempted to rush the consummation of the deal in order to take ~~advantage~~ of this announcement.

I know it isn't necessary for me to emphasize again how important it is that no word of this leaks out until we are ready.

Please convey my kind regards to Mr. Lark, and you may be sure I will give you as much notice as possible, so as to facilitate your departure for Hollywood, once I complete the business details which are now pending.

With my kindest regards, I am

Yours sincerely,

*Sam Z. Locky*



P.S. Since dictating this letter, your special delivery letter was sent to me from my home and so I know that you have sent the books.

Thank you for the criticism on the "Sergeant York" script. I will be glad to discuss it with you when you arrive here.

J. I. L.

December 2, 1940.

Dear Mr. Lasky:

I have a full week's start on my salary in work on the treatment for Mark Twain picture. Have been re-reading and re-assembling and studying vast material, preparatory to beginning story itself, in scene by scene continuity. I am going slowly, carefully and exhaustively at the task which will lay the groundwork by the time I am through, not only for one picture, but a number.

Yesterday, Sunday, the book review sections of Times and Herald-Tribune devoted feature space to a review of the latest book on Mark Twain, copies of which I am sending herewith. This book contains several priceless scenes we can use.

I am also enclosing a write-up on Helen Hayes, being desirous of telling you also that I consider her admirable for the role of Livy Gleason. I understand she is not too pleased with her movie experiences but thinks she could be prevailed upon to come to pictures for such an important portrayal. It takes a great star to grow old gracefully as Miss Hayes did in Victoria Regina and I believe she would score a great triumph as Livy. She and Brennan have heart and soul as well as histrionic ability. It would represent inspired casting to my mind. (Incidentally, saw Brennan yesterday in "The Westerner" and saw Mark Twain behind that make-up, in his every move. Perhaps Brennan and Miss Hayes aren't the biggest names in Hollywood - but I doubt if any two can touch them for sensational performances in these two roles. I will be interested to know your opinion.

If you can have complete charge of production and Director, writer and Producer can follow the dictates of their own judgment and feeling with respect to casting and all the other high qualities that must go into this production - you are going to achieve one of the grandest films that ever came out of Hollywood. Such an arrangement is well worth fighting for. This is to be no ordinary, hack-writing and mechanically produced jobs as you so well know. My best to you! Sincerely--

40-55

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DISPOSE OF ALL PROPOSED CHANGES IN DETAIL AT THAT TIME  
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Q IN THE MEANTIME PLEASE AIR MAIL EXECUTED COPIES OF  
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MR LASKY VERY APPRECIATIVE OF YOUR OWN SPLENDID  
ATTITUDE. BEST REGARDS=  
WALTER L BRUINGTON.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS

40-56

December 3, 1940.

Dear Ruby:

Your cordial and informative reply warmed our hearts and gave us a good running start idea of what to expect in the Hollywood vicinity.

I still can't tell you any more than I did before except that things are buzzing. The exact time that I will be wanted west is still indefinite but I should know within the next week or ten days, at which time I may be able to tell you the whole news.

I have had it emphasized three different times, in communications from the coast, to please keep things under cover until they get ready to make an announcement so my hands are temporarily tied.

The Shermans do not wish to go hog-wild in this change they are making. The Garden of Allah suggestion sounds good. If we can get any bargains at a lesser figure than we quoted - fine. We have no idea what real prices are out your way. We do want to live nicely and comfortably and have a feeling of the out-of-doors for a change, if possible. It will be a different sort of living than we have been accustomed to, for some years.

I am so glad that your own family spirits are high and conditions better. I think all of us have gone through hell in one way or another since this so-called depression hit.

It will certainly be a pleasure to see you and Doug and family again. I'll let you know the minute I can give you full particulars.

Again - Martha and I send deep appreciation for your help and counsel.

Best regards and good wishes!

Sincerely -

# So This Is Broadway

40-57

By  
GEORGE ROSS

It's about time Maurice Evans shared his private joke, which he has been laughing over to himself since Twelfth Night opened, even if four or five critics get hurt. These critics became quite ecstatic over Mr. Evans' skill in dramatizing a single word of the Bard of Avon's. The word was "Run?" The critics said that Mr. Evans gave it far greater meaning than any other Shakespearean player had seen in it. Well, Mr. Evans' private joke happens to be that Mr. Shakespeare never wrote that word "Run?" into the script. Evans wrote it himself. Okay, critics; go, hide.

Charlie Chaplin provoked plenty of laughter at the Conde Nast shindig for Stage Magazine by introducing those two famous bearded gentlemen, Monty Woolley and Ernest Boyd, in Russian. . . . William Wyler has been displaying a certain letter with great pride to his friends all week—a letter from

## Today's New Movie.

**THE THIEF OF BAGDAD** (Music Hall)—Alexander Korda's technicolor production stars Conrad Veidt, Sabu, June Duprez and Rex Ingram. The latest issue of Information Please is also on the screen.

**THE LADY WITH RED HAIR** (RKO Palace)—Miriam Hopkins' new film is on a double-feature bill with Kay Kyser in You'll Find Out.

Somerset Maugham congratulating him upon his direction of The Letter. . . . Before Jesse Lasky resigned himself to the early demise of Quiet, Please! and quit for the coast he made Harold Sherman of C. B. S. happy by buying from him a script based on Mark Twain's life story. Furthermore, Lasky promised to budget it as a \$2,000,000 talkie.

**There's No Telling Dep't:** The New York censors recently banned a French movie labeled Have You Nothing to Declare? So the owners of the film took it to Boston, and there was no trouble at all booking it into one of the Hub's artist theaters!

Having volunteered his help to a California group on a musical show, Groucho Marx is becoming really excited about the state of the theater. Report has him planning a visit to Washington in the next two weeks to interest the legislators in a revival of the Federal Theater Project. Not a single-handed effort, he's due in New York first to recruit other theater folk in his crusade. . . . It looks pretty definite now that Owen Davis' murder play Mr. and Mrs. North will be placed in rehearsal before the arrival of 1941. Owen Davis, Jr., is on his way east for one of the roles, Albert Hackett will fill another and Peggy Conklin a third. The

producer is William Harris, Jr. The play was fashioned by the prolific Mr. Davis from Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lockridge's novel, The Norths Meet Murder. Mr. Lockridge is the Sun's drama critic.

Anthony Brown is the gentleman who was involved in the production and direction of Tobacco Road. But that was a long time ago, and Brown drifted away from the Lesters as the years went past. So much time elapsed that even the management seems to have forgotten he helped produce it. Because Brown received his invitation to Tobacco Road's eighth anniversary party at Toots Shor's last night via the mailing list route!

**Success Story:** Sam H. Harris' statisticians added up a few figures this week and arrived at this conclusion: That in 59 weeks The Man Who Came to Dinner has grossed \$1,021,801 at the Music Box, and they're not even mentioning the cash receipts of the road editions. . . . The showfolk are going to miss Joseph Gaites, who passed away in Boston Wednesday. Young playwrights, especially, always received moral and cash encouragement from him. . . . Aside to RKO: And what of that much-publicized, well-ballyhooed clause in your Latin Adonis' (Desi Arnaz) contract which said he couldn't marry for three years? . . . The latest candidate to be approached for the cynical role of the stage and film director in Cue for Passion was Vernon MacFarlane, who decorates the night clubs. He giggled shyly, demonstrated he was flattered, and said "No."

ably in his element. Laure's du bord de L'Eau and Mandoline. Duparc's La Vie Anterieure and Debussy's La Flute de Pan followed in gripping succession.

Here were keen study, temperament, taste and penetration combining in searching out the last nuance of each lyric. The voice responded to the minutest need of text and tone. The diction was letter-and-spirit perfect.

Mme. Denya knew the trick of identifying herself with every song. Each was a world in itself, with its own mood and feeling, its unity of time and place, its inner law. A tilt of the head, a gesture of the hands and the picture was complete.

La Flute de Pan was a wonder of demure suggestion, the last phrase about the "lost girdle" vanishing in a hushed inuendo. The audience—prevalingly French—was delighted and compelled Mme. Denya to repeat it.

Paul Berl's accompaniments at the piano were quite in keeping. L. B.

## Hollywood News Notes

Special to the World-Telegram.

**HOLLYWOOD, Dec. 5.**—A remake of Owen Wister's The Virginian was announced by Paramount today as one of a dozen or more pictures which the newly signed producer, Sol Seigel, is to make for the coming year. Joel McCrea is being considered for the starring role. . . . Alfred Hitchcock finds there are more scenes needed before Mr. and Mrs. Smith is released and has sent a message for Gene Raymond to return from his New York vacation. . . . Clark Gable will emote opposite Lena Turner in M. G. M.'s next story for him. The picture is The Uniform.

## ers Open id's 8th Year

of Tobacco Road opened auspiciously with Jeeter Lesters instead of the to pay tribute to this hardy clattered the stage of the old hovering about—just in case. dreamed or asked for more.

this dirt road, only one, Edwin Walter, still hangs on to claim his mortgage due. The others, notably Robert Rose, Leora Thatcher and Winnie Phillips appear so much a part of the scheme as to seem cut of the original pattern.

The motion pictures have finally caught up with the play. But will that halt its run on Broadway? Not according to its box-office sages. B. I.

52 nd St. on LEXINGTON **TRANS-LUX** 85 th St. on MADISON  
TODAY thru Saturday at 12, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 P. M.  
**CAROLE LOMBARD · CHAS. LAUGHTON · WILLIAM GARGAN**  
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RACK GABLE · JOHN PARK  
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**ROXY** 7th Avenue & 50th St.

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UNITED ARTISTS · **RIVOLI** Broadway at 49th Street  
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Luscious French Vampire...  
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EDWARD SMALL presents  
**THE Son OF MONTE CRISTO**  
STARRING  
LOUIS HAYWARD · JOAN BENNETT  
**CAPITOL** B'WAY & 51st ST. DOORS OPEN 10 A. M.

CECIL B. DEWILLE'S  
**'NORTH WEST MOUNTED POLICE'**  
IN TECHNICOLOR  
**PARAMOUNT**  
IN PERSON  
ROSEMARY LANE  
RED SKELTON  
RAY HERBECK  
AND HIS BAND  
INK SPOTS

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ON THE  
**NEW YORK C**

**OPEN BEFORE CHRISTMAS!**

Special Reductions in Pullman Fares for Round-Trips.

For Happiness... all

Treat yourself to a vacation trip on a cozy,

40-58

December 5, 1940.

Dear Mr. Lasky:

I thoroughly appreciate the importance of no publicity on our pending production of "Mark Twain" and have kept still about it...but tonight, on the way home from downtown with your fine letter of December 2nd in my pocket, I saw the following or enclosed item in the World-Telegram indicating there has been a leak somewhere.

But I was aware there had been another leak before then for William Morris, Jr. had phoned me asking me to drop in and see him and said that he had just received authoritative word from the coast that you had an option on the Mark Twain play and were interested in making a studio tie-up. He promised to keep his information quiet and said some fine things about you. Some time ago, Bill tried to sell Mark Twain or bring interested parties to us, but Mr. Lark and I were not impressed with the nature of the propositions made.

When I arrived home this evening, Mrs. Sherman reported that a strange man had phoned, saying he was a personal friend of mine and that I was intending to surprise her - did she know I was going to Hollywood soon? Mrs. Sherman asked his name and he said he couldn't tell her since he was divulging information that she might not have been informed about. Mrs. Sherman said she didn't know what he was talking about and the man asked when I would be home. I presume this was a reporter seeking more information.

I presume it is extremely difficult to keep news of anything so well known as Mark Twain from slipping out. I am very sure that it has not happened through me...and the fact that word came clear from the coast is indicative that the deal is being talked about under cover. I hope, this being the case, that we can make an announcement pretty soon before it gets too hawked around.

Meanwhile, pending advice from you, I am making no statements. I am going forward on the Twain treatment along the lines you have visualized. There has been no word from Mr. Brington since Mr. Lark's wire...hope he has not been ill. Best regards and good wishes to you both.

Sincerely -

40-59

380 Riverside Drive,  
December 8, 1940.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
181 Saltair Avenue,  
West Los Angeles, Cal.,

Dear Mr. Lasky:

It has just occurred to me that yourself and family might be interested in listening in on the "STRANGE AS IT SEEMS" radio broadcast this coming Thursday night, December 12th, at 8:30 EST, over WABCA and Columbia network.

At this time Sir Hubert Wilkins, arctic explorer, and myself are to appear in connection with a dramatization of our long distance telepathic experiments which were conducted under supervision of Dr. Gardner Murphy, head of the ParaPsychology Department of Columbia University. These experiments were written up in the March 1939 issue of the Cosmopolitan Magazine in case you should like to learn more about them.

I have been interested for years in a study of mental phenomena and human psychology as the book I gave Mr. Bruington, "Your Key to Happiness" indicates. I will bring a copy to the coast for you when I come.

Work is progressing nicely on Mark Twain. I am assembling the material in chronological order and getting ready to put it in the form of a story, preparatory to starting on the shooting script. There is a vast amount of foundation work to be done and careful correlating, as you must know, if you have started to dive into the voluminous material.

Do you know, if you could be sure you would do more than one picture on Mark Twain that you could save great production expense by shooting portions of picture two and three (on the Mississippi - and Around the World) in the scenes provided for picture number 1?

It would mean that parts of the shooting script of pictures two and three would need to be finished as they pertained to settings and locales that would be used for scenes in picture number one. But with Brennan making scenes for picture number one - say on the Mississippi and at Hannibal, he could carry on with scenes that could be later used in follow-up pictures.

Perhaps this would prove too involved and it would be better to make the sets all over again and go on location at the same place at a later time, when real work on picture number two, etc. might start. But you can see that we will have to have several episodes in our first great picture of Twain that have to do with his boyhood...and his life out west...and on the Mississippi. These won't be the major part of the first picture but will give us a vivid picture of the dramatic factors that helped make Sam Clemens the great person he later became, as Mark Twain.

You've got a second "Gone With the Wind" here of a different character entirely. Something much more Americana than this other successful picture and something which can certainly be road-showed in every important manner. I mean Americana in the sense of universal appeal - young and old.

I hope your plans are moving forward satisfactorily and that you will soon be able to go into action.

My best regards to Mr. Evans, Mr. Bruington and yourself!

Sincerely,



CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

40-40

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

December 9th, 1940

Mr. Harold W. Sherman,  
527 Fifth Avenue - Room 1009,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

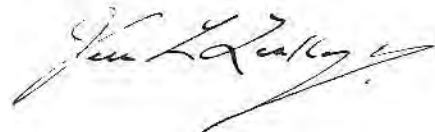
I am in receipt of your two letters of December 2nd and December 5th, and the clipping which contained the announcement of Mark Twain. I was sorry to see that word leaked out, even in this one item, but I know that you will continue to cooperate and try and prevent any premature announcements.

You mentioned that Bill Morris tried to sell Mark Twain or bring interested parties to you. You would help me very much if you would write me a complete history of whatever negotiations took place prior to my appearing on the scene. This will be helpful to me so that as I pursue my negotiations with different companies, they won't be able to surprise me by telling me something I don't already know. I will be glad to have this information as soon as possible.

I will keep you posted on any new developments here, and if no more leaks occur in New York, I think I can keep the story from breaking here until we are ready.

With kind regards -

Yours sincerely,



**VITAPHONE**  
REGD. TRADE MARK

40-61

390 Riverside Drive,  
December 14, 1940.

Dear Mr. Lasky:

Answering your letter of December 10th,  
just received.

When Harry Moses, producer of "Grand  
Hotel", optioned my "Mark Twain" play for Broadway  
production in the fall of 1936, every major picture  
company was after him to read the script. So  
far as I know, he let them all see it, making it  
clear, however, that he needed no financing and  
intended to produce the play independent of any  
picture backing. Moses, as we were completing  
production plans, was stricken ill and later died  
of cancer, the rights to the play reverting to me.

Since that time I have had a number of  
offers both for Broadway and picture production  
but have considered none of them to be right.  
The impasse between the dramatists Guild and  
Hollywood picture companies on backing of Broadway  
plays has kept "Mark Twain" from being produced  
at least twice, in a manner that would have been  
acceptable.

Until you came on the scene, Mr. Lark  
and I had rejected all movie offers or approaches  
because they were based on the premise that, since  
the play had not been produced on Broadway, the  
value of the property should be less to them. This  
was standardized procedure which we felt was out  
of line in consideration of the established value  
of "Mark Twain" even without a Broadway dramatization  
of his life being produced.

You must expect that every major company,  
since my play "Mark Twain" was written and it became  
known that I controlled the exclusive rights, has  
considered the possibility of producing "Mark  
Twain" in pictures. No company would overlook this  
bet. To give you a history of such negotiations would  
not be fair to Bill Morris who sought, at one time,  
to secure picture backing for a Broadway presentation  
of "Mark Twain". I would not want him to feel, in any  
way, that I had taken advantage of any interest he or  
his firm had developed.

The fact remains that you are the only person who has been given such consideration because we are of the opinion, based upon our conferences with you, your own background, and your concept of how this "Mark Twain" dramatization should be picturized, that you will handle this subject in the high quality manner required by the Mark Twain Estate, Mr. Lark and myself.

I have been working steadily on the "Mark Twain" story, gathering the vast amount of material into alignment and fusing the incidents into one another. The more progress I make, the more enthused I become.

I hope negotiations are going forward satisfactorily. I see that, according to Variety, the success of the "Minute Rocks" picture has encouraged all major companies to go in for biographical sport stories. I novelized the Red Grange, "One Minute To Play" story, first feature sport picture ever made...and several years ago, Mr. Knopf, then scenic editor of Metro, considered hiring me as a writer to adapt the hockey story, "Hands Across the Border" which I see Metro is just now taking off the shelf. I've perhaps written more sport novels than any other living writer - 60 sport books which have sold over 7,000,000 copies!... Eventually I hope to do the screenplays of great life characters such as "Mark Twain"...That picture companies are discovering the value of establishing a focal point of interest in an outstanding real life character, whether the background be that of sport or literature or medicine or war - is a good sign. These kind of pictures will always stand a far better chance of success, properly done. (In my files now is the life story of EE COBB, baseball's immortal. I traveled around the baseball circuit with him last year he was in baseball, getting his story, and then could not use it at the time. What a picture this would make - greater than Rockne! And imagine the tie-ups that could be effected with it!...Perhaps, once we get under way, we can do a number of pictures of such character!

My best regards and good wishes!

Sincerely,

40-62

**Casa Allegra**  
**2005 La Brea Terrace**  
**Hollywood, California**

16. December 1940

My dear Harold:

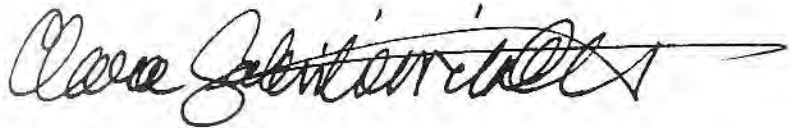
Unfortunately your telegram did not arrive until the day of the Broadcast, which was too late, since I already had an engagement of several days' standing. I was sorry to miss what must have been a very interesting occasion. Your letter came a day after the broadcast, but in any case I was glad to hear from you and know that you are still working along those esoteric lines of human consciousness. They will eventually be the means of a higher evolution, I feel certain, in spite of discouraging signs these days.

Although I did not express any "preference" for Mr. Lasky, and only asked that he have a hearing in the matter of the Mark Twain screen production, I am of course very glad that it has turned out as it has, because I also am convinced that he takes a fine and deeply appreciative attitude towards my father.

Harold  
16. December '40  
p.2

Hoping that you and your charming  
family are well and will have a delightful  
Holiday Season, believe me, with love to you  
all,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carol Johnston". The signature is written in dark ink and features a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, Inc.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

40-63

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

December 16th, 1940

Mr. Harold Sherman,  
380 Riverside Drive,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I planned most carefully to hear your broadcast last Thursday evening which occurred at 5.30 o'clock our time, but I was called over to an important meeting in the studio at 5.15 and when I returned to my office the broadcast was over.

By the way, Sir Hubert Wilkins is an old friend of mine - I used to see him quite often.

If you have a recording of the program, I will look forward to hearing it when you come west - which reminds me that I don't think you should plan to leave until sometime after the first of the year. I have had a number of confidential talks with some of my personal friends who are heads of important picture companies here, and it is going to take longer than I anticipated to work out the details of a proper deal which would protect our combined interests.

If I had a treatment of the story, or even a few pages, boiled down, indicating the chronological order of events from Mark Twain's birth to his death, which might be included in the picture, I could make faster progress. The play is helpful insofar as it touches on events in Twain's life from middle age on.

Regarding your suggestion of considering more than one picture in order to save expense in shooting, this is impractical for reasons that I will explain to you when you are on the ground.

If we are to succeed, the first thing to do is to take advantage of all the material and get the best possible arrangement of the one story of Mark Twain from his birth to his death. There is so much material that if the first picture is successful, and it will only be successful if we take the fullest advantage of all the available material, then it will be

quite possible, in fact, it is my hope that we can later do a story of Mark Twain on the Mississippi - Mark Twain Around the World or Mark Twain, the Boy, but these are all matters for the future and are dependent on the financial success of the first picture.

Inasmuch as you have been at work for about three weeks, I will appreciate your sending me, as soon as you can, anything you would like me to read or consider. This might help me to guide you, from a practical picture point of view, in the preparation of a story of this kind.

As we are within two weeks of New Years, I am almost certain that I won't conclude a deal until after the first of the year, consequently, you can be sure now that you won't be leaving for Hollywood until sometime in January, at the earliest, and I promise you I will give you as much notice as possible as I know you have to make your personal arrangements; dispose of your apartment, etc. With the deepest regret, I am cancelling your football tickets.

I like your enthusiasm for the story, as indicated in your letter, and I urge you to work on with all speed because the more of the treatment you can have ready, the more concrete our proposition becomes as I discuss it with any releasing company.

With kindest regards -

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sam L. Leetly". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Sincerely yours,".

40-64

December 17, 1940.

Dear Howard: [How?]

I am returning herewith your suggestions relative to the "Mark Twain" play.

I appreciate your fine interest and the comments made.

I have known from the start that my play was possibly an hour longer in length than it could be when it came to production - but I knew, too, that it was loaded with good material, and I have preferred to wait and do the cutting and revising necessary at the will of the director and producer, when such time came.

Otherwise, as I've explained to you and you so well know, I could be making changes which certain friends feel would improve the script and never get the job completed since everyone has different ideas of what should be left in or out or added.

I have a plan for cutting and condensing to submit to the producer who may wish to produce this play - but I might cut something now which he considers of great value and would wish preserved.

The three scenes which you suggest under caption of Act Three are not drama at all in the basic sense. They are all exposition. Everything takes place or has taken place off-stage and the characters come in to either report it or talk about it. In my play, despite the fact that it is over-written, something happens in every scene. You can't spellbind the audience with fine dialogue alone - you've got to have movement, action. If you will review your suggested scenes I think you will agree that they accomplish nothing but conversation but no action or motive is advanced on the stage.

Sincerely,



December 17, 1940.

40-~~66~~  
64A

Dear Howard: [Kach]

I am returning herewith your suggestions relative to the "Mark Twain" play.

I appreciate your fine interest and the comments made.

I have known from the start that my play was possibly an hour longer in length than it could be when it came to production - but I knew, too, that it was loaded with good material, and I have preferred to wait and do the cutting and revising necessary at the will of the stage director and Broadway producer, if and when such time comes.

Otherwise, as I've previously explained to you and you so well know, I could be making changes which certain friends feel would improve the script and never get the job completed since everyone has different ideas of what should be left in or out or added.

I have a plan for cutting and condensing to submit to the producer who may wish to present this play - but I might cut something now which such a producer would consider of great value and would wish to preserve.

The three scenes which you suggest under caption of Act Three are not drama at all in the basic sense. They are all exposition. Everything takes place or has taken place offstage and the characters come in to either report it or talk about it. In my play, despite the fact that it is over-written, something happens in every scene. You can't spellbind the audience with fine dialogue alone - you've got to have movement, action.

If you will review your suggested scenes I think you will agree that they accomplish nothing but conversation - and no action or motive is advanced on the stage.

I'll enjoy seeing you this Thursday at 1 p.m. at the City Club.

Sincerely,

40-65

December 17, 1940.

Dear Mr. Lasky:

Your check for the second week's salary arrived Monday. Evidently, since you mailed it out on the 12th, it was your intention for it to be in my hands on Saturday, the 14th of December, at the end of the week, and such prompt remittance is much appreciated.

I am working from eight to twelve and even fifteen hours a day on the "Mark Twain" material, as the spirit moves me. Some days I get into phases of his life where I can naturally carry through further without feeling the need for interruption.

I am plotting and charting the incidents preparatory to putting them in the form of a treatment. I will have them so well in hand in a few weeks that I could really start on the shooting script itself, rather than the story, if you so desired.

Please advise how you may wish this handled. My basic re-study of the "Mark Twain" material is laying the groundwork for anything we might wish to do in the future on any expanded program.

My best wishes to Mr. Evans, Mr. Bruington and yourself!

Sincerely,

10-67  
December 23, 1940.

Dear Mr. Lasky:

Your salary check arrived on schedule, despite the Christmas jam of mail.

I'm sorry you missed the broadcast which was recorded. It broke all mail return records in the history of the "Strange As It Seems" program and Wilkins and I are going to have to mail a composite acknowledgement to thousands of listeners. There is enormous interest in the subject of the mind.

I am sure you are going to be mightily pleased with the treatment on "Mark Twain" when I have it ready to show. Our last letters crossed in the mail and in mine I described what I was doing.

I am not rushing an important assignment like this although I am putting long hours on it. The alignment of all the material and the laying out of a fluidic continuity so that the movement flows from one scene to another is the most tedious end of this task. Once the foundation is laid, the white heat of creative writing based on the assembled material then begins. My work will commence to take real form within the next week or two but it would not be right for me to send it on piecemeal at present. I am sure you have enough in the play and the books on Mark Twain's life to convince any releasing company of the immense possibilities - although I know that a completed effective treatment is obviously a most convincing document.

I agree, of course, that the first great basic story on Mark Twain's life is the thing - but the very nature of my study and work is revealing to me how subsequent stories can be handled as well.

I am glad you are standing "pat" on protecting combined interests to produce this picture as you feel it must be done...and I am confident things will work out as you plan.  
Best holiday greetings! Sincerely---

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

40-66

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

December 24th, 1940

Mr. Harold Sherman,  
380 Riverside Drive,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Pardon this late acknowledgment of the receipt of your letters of December 14th and December 17th.

In the latter letter you mentioned that you have the material so well in hand that in a short time you could start on the shooting script itself rather than the treatment. In a previous letter I indicated that the first thing I had expected to receive from you were your notes outlining the chronological order of the picturesque and dramatic events in Twain's life, which will indicate to me the material from which we have to work.

As you know, the object of a treatment for pictures is to tell straightaway, with a minimum of dialogue and without breaking up the story into shooting scenes, the actual story the scenario is to tell. By this you will see that we have three stages of preparation: first - the plotting and charting of the incidents which we hope will contain all the outstanding material that might be useful. (I hope you will send this material as soon as possible). Second - the dramatization of these incidents into a unified story line which we call the treatment; and third - the scenario, which could only be written after the producer and the writer have agreed on every detail of the treatment. Therefore, I urge you to forget the shooting script, but complete the research notes and devote all your time to the treatment.

Wishing you the Compliments of the Season -

Yours sincerely,



PS - In your letter of December 14th, after outlining to me the history of the Mark Twain negotiations to date, you referred to the fact that you have in your files the life story of Ty Cobb. I suggest that you forward this to me at once and I will read it promptly and be prepared to discuss it with you on your arrival.

**VITAPHONE**  
REGD. TRADE MARK

ST

DIRECT



# RCA



## RADIOGRAM R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

A RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA SERVICE

TO ALL THE WORLD — BETWEEN IMPORTANT U. S. CITIES — TO SHIPS AT SEA

RECEIVED AT 64 BROAD STREET, NEW YORK. AT \_\_\_\_\_ STANDARD TIME

KEGCF L78W WB HOLLYWOOD CALIF 35 NL 23 NFT

CL

12/24/  
40

HAROLD M SHERMAN 380 RIVERSIDE DR NEWYORK

MY BEST WISHES FOR A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS. WHILE I REGRET  
WE WILL NOT SPEND NEW YEARS TOGETHER AS PLANNED I WANT TO  
WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ALL THE JOYS OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON

JESSE L LASKY

40-70

**Telephone: HAnover 2-1811**

To secure prompt action on inquiries, this original RADIOGRAM should be presented at the office of R.C.A. COMMUNICATIONS, Inc. In telephone inquiries quote the number preceding the place of origin.

41-01

January 2, 1941.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
131 Saltair Ave.,  
West Los Angeles, Cal.

Dear Mr. Lasky:

I have now employed a full time secretary and am dictating to her the detailed notes I have made as a result of my exhaustive study of Mark Twain's life from all the available sources.

When I am finished, we will have a complete chronological chart, from which the treatment itself will be prepared. This chart will enable us to go back to any of the source material at any time for reference, with respect to characters, incidents, atmosphere, physical appearance of places and individuals, etc.

I have felt it advisable, despite the great amount of time I had already invested in study and research on Mark Twain to completely review the material in my own files from which the play was written and to re-read all the important volumes and data on Twain. What we will have will be a crystallization of this material in such form as to be readily adapted into a comprehensive story outline. With this done, the work will obviously progress much faster.

Naturally, the highlights of the treatment are already occurring to me and this will write itself fairly rapidly when the Incident Chart is completed.

The Ty Cobb material requires a few days work on it before it could be passed on to you and I think I had better keep my mind on Twain for the time being - but I wanted to indicate to you the other valuable properties that we could have in the offing a little later.

If you saw the Rose Bowl game it must have been exciting. Thanks for your holiday wire! May 1941 be your BANNER one! Sincerely-

41-03

WALTER BRENNAN

January 13, 1941.


Dear Mr. Sherman;

Many thanks for your kindness in sending us a copy of your book, "Your Key to Happiness". I can see by glancing through it there's ample food for thought and am looking forward to the pleasure of reading it when I am not pushed for time. Mrs. Brennan has read several chapters and tells me it hits the nail on the head.

MARK TWAIN! It's a funny thing that since our pleasant evening together in New York, the name has confronted me every other day or so somewhere. May it be a good omen!

Again--may I tell you how deeply we appreciate your thoughtfulness in sending us your book. And may the New Year bring you all that you may desire for you and yours.

Cordially,



Walter Brennan

WB/c

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

41-05

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**

PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

(23)

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

January 14th, 1941

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
330 Riverside Drive,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

It is sometime since I have written you principally because there is nothing new that I can say to you until you can send me some kind of a first draft treatment of Mark Twain.

I find it very difficult to negotiate the kind of deal we want, giving us the necessary freedom in production, important director, etc., because practically all the companies have considered the material at one time or another and have given it up as almost hopeless, claiming that it is impossible to get a dramatic conception of Twain due to the fact that the incidents in his lifetime are spread out over such a great span and cover such a variety of almost unrelated episodes.

Because I rather expected to run into this situation, which is nothing new in my experience, I was happy to learn when I first met you in New York that you had so studied the subject, due to your research on the play, that you felt it would not be a difficult task for you to write a treatment sufficiently cohesive to illustrate the possibilities in the subject matter for a great picture. Lacking this treatment, I have not pressed my negotiations, beyond some preliminary and very confidential discussions.

It all boils down to this -- six weeks have gone by and I still have nothing other than the books and the play which, of course, do not offer the film companies anything beyond what they have considered. You might think that the play would be helpful in demonstrating the material but, because it only deals in rather a sketchy manner with comparatively few incidents in the latter part of Twain's life, it does not help very much.

**VITAPHONE**  
REGD. TRADE MARK



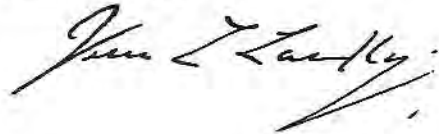
We have to be very careful not to appear to be peddling our story and, consequently, the last few weeks I have possessed myself in patience, determined not to pursue my negotiations any further until I can back them up with the fruits of your preliminary work.

I judge you have found your task greater than you anticipated and though I don't want to put undue pressure on you, I urge you to send me, as soon as possible, something that when read by an experienced producer would indicate that Twain's life story is practical.

Mr. Bruington will be in New York over the weekend and will discuss with you and Mr. Lark in much more detail the general situation that we have run into out here.

With my kindest regards, I am

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Lark". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Jim Lark".

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

41-17

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

24

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

January 31st, 1941

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
380 Riverside Drive,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Enclosed is the check covering  
your salary for the additional week ended February 1st,  
as arranged by Mr. Bruington.

I appreciated your letter explaining  
the reasons for your not writing a treatment in the first  
place and outlining the work you have been doing over the  
past few weeks. Mr. Bruington, of course, explained every-  
thing to me.

Needless to say I am eagerly awaiting  
the "master chronology", as you call it, of all the material,  
in fact, on the strength of what you tell me about it, this  
chronology should be helpful in my negotiations - so please  
send it on quickly.

I will keep you posted on the progress  
of negotiations, and I trust it won't be long before you  
will be on your way to California.

My sincere thanks for your and Mr. Lark's  
willingness to cooperate with Mr. Bruington, and I assure  
you that the extension in time will be more than justified  
by the results finally obtained.

Mr. Evans joins me in sending kindest re-  
gards to you and Mr. Lark.

Sincerely yours,

*Jesse L. Lasky*

VITAPHONE

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

41-21  
TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

27

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

February 5th, 1941

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I am in receipt of your letter dated February 3rd and the pages of the Chronology.

Mr. Bruington did not bring back with him the first portion of the Chronology mentioned in your letter. From my conversation on the 'phone today with Mr. Bruington, I gathered that your secretary intended to give him the first portion but, for some reason, this was not done. I know you will check this immediately.

After I have had a chance to study the Chronology which you forwarded with your letter, I will write you again.

With my kindest regards -

Yours sincerely,

*Jesse L. Lasky*

VITAPHONE  
TRADE MARK

41-22

Dec. 10, 1940 .....	\$625.00
Dec. 23, 1940 .....	125.00
Dec. 30, 1940 .....	125.00
Jan. 6, 1941 .....	125.00
Jan. 10, 1941 .....	125.00
Jan. 23, 1941 .....	125.00
Feb. 7, 1941 .....	<u>375.00</u>
Total \$1625.00	

To Charles T. Lark  
for Services Rendered

From Harold M. Sherman

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**

PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

*28*

41-24

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

February 10th, 1941

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
380 Riverside Drive,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Just a line to let you know that the first part of the Chronology, which Mr. Bruington neglected to bring with him, arrived okay. I also received the copies of the Character and Idea Charts which, I believe, gives me now all the material you have prepared to date.

We have been shooting the "Sergeant York" picture and Walter Brennan, who is playing Pastor Pile, often talks to me about the part of Mark Twain. His enthusiasm for it is contagious.

You will hear from me as soon as there is some good news.

With kind regards -

Yours sincerely,

*Jesse L. Lasky*

VITAPHONE  
READ TRADE MARK

41-32

February 18, 1941.

Dear Charles:

I am sorry it can't be the entire amount. My financial burdens are heavy with my family, my mother, my unemployed brother's family of three children, and back indebtedness accumulated during my lean periods.

I have finished the first pay stage of the work on the "Mark Twain" picture - completion of the chronology of all dramatizable material in his life...and am now awaiting instruction from the coast to start on the treatment, when ~~salary~~ will commence again. The contract calls for first sizable payment on purchase of picture rights itself when I leave for Hollywood, with plans being completed for production. The usual delays are now occurring on this end and I do not know definitely when I may be called.

Meanwhile I have had to budget myself to see me through the writing of my part of the Wilkins book, which I had to postpone because of the Twain work - and the pressure of those dependent on me is considerable.

It is extremely difficult to do good creative work under financial strain. I have had my share of this. As I told you, I see no reason why you should not emerge into the light of a new day insofar as your writings are concerned...and perhaps you are facing your last hurdles now. I regret that I cannot be of greater aid in seeing you over the jumps - but this may help a little.

My best to you always!

Sincerely,

KW

The Law Offices of  
**WALTER L. BRUINGTON**  
8584 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles

FRANK D. SPRINGER, JR.

32  
41-45

March 11, 1941

MR. HAROLD M. SHERMAN  
380 Riverside Drive  
Apartment 8 A  
New York, New York

Dear Harold:

Mr. Lasky and I thought you would be pleased to know that R.K.O. evidences considerable interest in the Twain story. I think we should have had a definite answer from them long before now but for the complications caused by "Citizen Kane." No decision has yet been arrived at as to the release of the latter picture and I can readily appreciate that it is causing great concern at the studio.

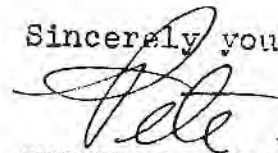
Metro is still considering the material. Mr. Lasky has offered to present a treatment to them if they would consider it helpful in arriving at a decision but they remain undecided on that point.

The York picture is felt by everyone on the Warner lot to be outstandingly good and Mr. Lasky and I are a little fearful that the general enthusiasm engendered by the apparent potential success of that picture might recreate further interest at Warner Brothers. Although this is a good thing from a competitive standpoint I think we should all prefer having the picture made at Metro or R.K.O.

In view of the material interest at R.K.O. we are withholding the presentation to the other major studios until such time as Mr. Schaffer has made his final decision.

With best personal regards both to yourself and Mr. Lark, I am

Sincerely yours,



WALTER L. BRUINGTON

WLB:JL

41-47

March 14, 1941.

Dear Pete: [Brington]

Your letter, received this morning, has been much appreciated by Mr. Lark and myself.

We have known that Mr. Lasky must be head over heels in work - and supposed, for this reason, developments might have been a little more delayed.

But a financial group here had approached us, once again, with reference to the stage production of "Mark Twain" and I was about to write you to ask if interest was holding with certain companies, when this word came. Were your negotiations not to go through, we would not want to miss a fall production on Broadway.

I do not think it would take too long to prepare a treatment, with the vast amount of work now completed and with the rough outline I have here, if it should be desired. Did the deal go through reasonably soon, I even believe I could promise an acceptable shooting script in such time as to enable the production of "Twain" to be made in order to synchronize with a November 30th opening in Hannibal, Missouri, was it still considered desirable to keep to this schedule. It would be great, I think, if we could.

I'm raring to go and have everything of vital importance finally cleared away here... so could leave now with a free mind. Speed the day, Pete - because I have the deepening impression that we can all do some great things together when you get us on the coast!

I agree that RKO or METRO would be much preferred to WARNERS - but will accept your judgment in any case. Please keep us advised!

Best to Mr. Lasky and yourself!  
Sincerely,



CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEAR"

41-54

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

34

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

March 28th, 1941

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
330 Riverside Drive,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I think you understood why I never answered your last letter. It was due to the fact that Mr. Bruington had written you fully on the situation and there was nothing I could add at that time.

I talked to Mr. Bruington on the phone today and he told me he was writing a letter to Mr. Lask - all of which I think brings matters up to date. Nevertheless, I am happy to advise you that negotiations have been resumed on the Mark Twain picture and I hope to have good news for you within the next two weeks.

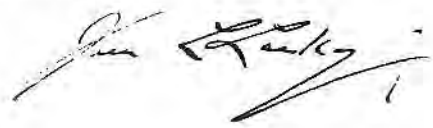
I took time out from "Sergeant York" to read the Chronology, and I realize the wealth of material available for the screenplay. I am really eager to hear the treatment you have in mind, to which you referred in your last letter.

We are within a few weeks of finishing "Sergeant York" and it promises to be a truly great picture.

By the way, Mrs. Lasky received the copy of your book and I had a chance to read the first two or three chapters. In the meantime Mrs. Lasky read it and enjoyed it so much, she is urging me to finish it which I certainly will do.

With my kindest regards -

Sincerely,



41-56

35

March 31, 1941.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
181 Saltair Ave.,  
West Los Angeles, Cal.,

Dear Mr. Lasky:

I am greatly pleased that negotiations now appear to be proceeding satisfactorily.

As I stated to Mr. Bruington, I have now cleared up all other creative work which might have held me to the east - or given me a feeling of work left undone...and am mentally in great shape to make the change - as is my entire family.

I look forward to my work with you on this Mark Twain story as one of the great opportunities of my life - and if you will continue your trust in me, I promise you one of the greatest shooting scripts Hollywood has ever seen. I say this with all modesty, but I have prepared to do this job through twenty years of intensive experience which embraces much more than the average writer, however big the name, has put into his background. I think what I privately say to you here will be evidenced once you see what I will begin to do with the material contained in the Chronology when the real work ~~begins~~ under way. We'll give all Hollywood something to shoot at in picture achievements for some years to come.

I KNOW I can work creatively with you...that you were meant to do this MARK TWAIN story...and I KNOW it is going to lead to our doing other immense things together...which are going to give us much happiness from a humanitarian standpoint as well as the commercial.

I am so glad that the YORK picture is also showing such promise since it will establish such current interest in your name and activities. Then to follow with TWAIN provides a grand climax.

I am sure you thoroughly realize now why it took me the time it did to properly lay the groundwork. The big heavy work is done - ready for the creative fires to be lit...and I am a seager to get at the treatment as you are to go over it with me.

It is nice that Mrs. Lasky found my book so interesting; I am looking forward more than ever to meeting her, now that I know she is so aware of these powers of mind...and I think she will enjoy meeting Mrs. Sherman, too, who shares this knowledge.

We can't have anything but a great success through such an association. You have apparently surrounded yourself with men of high principles and ideals...as well as picture ability...and what you have done and will do can only reflect great credit upon the picture industry...at a time when the world needs INSPIRATION and practical UPLIFTING. The joy, the humor, the character that is in TWAIN is priceless.

I hope you will let me do my work in my study in whatever home we choose in California...so I can be away from the usual pressure and well-intentioned intrusions of Hollywood. I am sure I can do a much higher quality of creation there - conferring with you and the director and others directly interested as the occasion demands.

How soon would you be wanting me to come west if the deal is set reasonably soon? I can pull up stakes quicker now than I could have before. Even so, I would need a little notice.

My best wishes to you and my appreciation for what you are doing in my behalf. I trust, when negotiations are completed, you can arrange a writing salary for me commensurate with the Grade-A job I will be required to perform, despite the fact that I do not have the "mechanical Hollywood rating". I am confident that you will be working for my best interests at all times as I will be for yours!

Thank you for your letter...My regards to Walter Brington and yourself!

Sincerely,

41-57

March 31st, 1941.

Walter L. Bruington, Esq.,  
8584 Sunset Boulevard,  
Los Angeles, California.

Dear Mr. Bruington:-

It was nice to receive your letter of the 28th inst., with rich pink view concerning the prospects over the culmination of the strenuous efforts which you and Mr. Lasky have put in our mutual enterprize.

I have examined the publication matters which you referred to on page 13 of our tentative agreement and note that the list thereof is as follows:

- "(a) MARK TWAIN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY - Pub. 1924 (2 Vols.)
- (b) MARK TWAIN'S SPEECHES-Pub.1910 (1 Vol.) and 1923 (1 Vol.)
- (c) BIOGRAPHY OF MARK TWAIN - Albert Bigelow Paine(Four editions; one one volume, one two volumes, one three volumes, and one four volumes)
- (d) MARK TWAIN'S NOTEBOOKS- Edited by Albert Bigelow Paine;
- (e) MARK TWAIN'S LETTERS - Edited by Albert Bigelow Paine
- (f) Two motion picture films made by Edison Company (circa 1906-07) containing shots of Mark Twain
- (g) MARK TWAIN IN ERUPTION - 1 Vol. to be published Fall 1940 by Harper Bros. Publishing Company
- (h) Any and all other book or books which may be published or authorized to be published by the Company or the Samuel L. Clemens Estate, containing Mark Twain biographical or quasi biographical material or memorabilia."

I certainly do not understand the desire expressed in Section A of your letter as among the things you require, to wit:

"An assignment to you of the copyright on each of the books"

I take it that you do not mean the assignment to Mr. Lasky of the copyrights, as of course, we as Trustees cannot do that. I take it that what you really desire is a list of the several copyrights as they stand at present so that you may check the records thereof. Some stand in the name of the Mark Twain Company and some stand in the name of Clara Clemens Gabilowitsh, and of course, there

Walter L. Bruington, Esq. - / 2

Mar. 31, 1941.

are some that stand in the name of Albert Bigelow Paine. As to the Autobiography we have a written contract with Paine to use all of his material, but, of course, we would not have an assignment of that copyright at all. We will have a confirming letter or contract from Mrs. Gabrilowitsch, or Mr. Langdon and I as Trustees can execute a confirming agreement, or something of that kind.

I will be glad to check these items over with Harper & Brothers in due course so that I can send you an up to date list insofar as possible. I think all you need to do is to check up the copyright dates at Washington because insofar as you are concerned the agreement will take care of that giving you sole and exclusive right to use all the contents of the books in said list for the period covered by the contract.

With every good wish to you and Mr. Lasky, I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Charles T. Lark)

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# WESTERN UNION

1201

**SYMBOLS**  
DL = Day Letter  
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SD118 46 NT XC=SU WESTLOSANGELES CALIF 1

HAROLD SHERMAN=

*OK* 380 RIVERSIDE DRIVE NYK=

HAVE DONE GOOD SALES JOB YOU WILL HAVE BESSIE LASKYS COMPLETE SUPPORT THEY ARE ANXIOUS TO HAVE YOU HERE BELIEVE YOU WILL HAVE FULL ASSIGNMENT OF SCRIPT STOP WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU CERTAIN THINGS BEFORE YOUR CONFERENCE WITH LASKY INFORM ME YOUR ARRIVAL BEST REGARDS=

MERCEDES DE ACOSTA.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

~~39~~

*for J. J. L. L.*

41-62  
APRIL 1, 1941  
39

41-63

27

April 2, 1941.

Miss Mercedes DeAcosta,  
785 Napoli Drive,  
Pacific Palisades, Cal.

Dear Friend:

What you have done for me is a priceless thing and my appreciation is beyond words.

There is every indication that I am entering the most important phase of my life's work, after years of intensive preparation. I think this is true of all of us who have come into the understanding we possess.

For this reason, it is extremely vital that the foundation for new associations is properly laid. There must be a harmony and confidence established at the very start which transcends ordinary business relationships.

Your wire to me is most heartening and inspiring. Any other writer on this MARK TWAIN script would be ruinous. I could not possibly transmit to him the dramatic and spiritual concept I have developed in me from years of study of this character. I have had previous experience in writing movie scenarios; I know the camera angles and the technique. In this instance, I know more about TWAIN and the subject matter concerning him than anyone else could know - unless they devote months of study as I have done. Working with Jesse Lasky and supported by his wife, who has this fine spiritual vision, I can conceive of the grandest possible accomplishment.

Perhaps this picture can be a "building for the future", leading to a series of commercially successful but humanly inspiring features!

If you would care to write me and tell me some of the things you feel I should know, I would be grateful. You may be sure I will inform you the time of my arrival. Word from Lasky indicates that plans will be completed soon. Again - my profound thanks and my deepest regards, in which Mrs. Sherman joins me.

Sincerely -

41-666

The Law Offices of  
WALTER L. BRUINGTON

6584 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles

FRANK D. SPRINGER, JR.

April 4, 1941

MR. HAROLD M. SHEPMAN  
380 Riverside Drive  
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Harold,

I have just received a wire from Mr. Lark's secretary saying that he is ill and that it will take him at least a week to clear the copyright situation on the Twain properties.

Probably within that period of time it will be necessary for me to make detailed representations to the studio as to who owns the motion picture, radio and television rights in each of the books written about Twain, and further to represent it as a fact that we shall be able to produce within probably another week a grant of the motion picture, radio and television rights from that owner. Since, in all probability, there are several owners, this further complicates the problem.

Since Mr. Lark is ill, I wonder if it would be possible for you to find out exactly who is the owner of the rights in question as between the editor of each of the books, the publisher of each, the Mark Twain Estate, the Mark Twain Company and/or any of the distributees of the Mark Twain Estate. We must, you know, be able to show a chain of recorded evidence of title to those rights.

Heretofore, this has not been done because of the uncertainty as to whether the option would be exercised. Now that it seems 99% certain, prompt action is requisite in order to keep the deal from growing cold. Naturally none of us want this to happen, and but for Mr. Lark's unfortunate illness, I am sure that it would not.

It is probably unnecessary for me to tell you how pleased I am that we are so close to the consummation of a deal. See what you can do for me about getting the answers to some of these questions as promptly as possible, and keep your fingers crossed in the meantime.

Faithfully yours,

WALTER L. BRUINGTON



P.S. In the event that any of this is not clear, ask Mr. Lark's secretary to show you the letter which I have already written to him covering our needs in detail.

*etc.*

41-67

[4-5-41]

Dear Mr Sherman, -

I was most pleased  
and surprised to receive  
your book with inscription -

Please accept my sincere  
thanks and appreciation -

I am hard at work on a  
large mural so shall read  
your book as soon as  
I have some spare time.

With warm wishes

Sincerely

Bessie Estey

41-69

April 9, 1941.

Mr. Walter L. Bruington,  
8584 Sunset Boulevard,  
Los Angeles, Cal.,

Dear Pete:

Thank you for your good letter with regard to the copyright situation.

Mr. Lark has not been well for several months and has been in at the office half time.

I have checked matters and you can be assured, when you are ready at your end, that what you desire in the way of rights can be granted. Everything is under control here.

You should be getting this information by the first of the week from Mr. Lark.

I realize there are many details to be attended to but am glad of your report that you are in agreement on main points of the pending deal.

I am eager to get back to work on the Twain story. I am hopeful and am presuming that Walter Brenman will be available reasonably soon. I have not as yet seen Martha Scott in "Cheers for Miss Bishop" but I am wondering if, judging from the reviews, she might be a good prospect to play Livy Clemens?

Many questions like this can be rather quickly decided, of course, when we are ready to get under way.

My best regards to Mr. Lasky and yourself and my best wishes to you both!

Sincerely,

41-70

785 Napoleon St.

April 9<sup>th</sup> 1941

Dear Harold Sherman -

Before you  
talk with Rocky I just  
wanted to tell you certain  
ways by which I felt  
you could better impress  
him - also Bessie wants  
to see you first, without  
Jesse knowing about your  
meeting. It seems there  
is already another man  
he wants to put on the  
story and Bessie feels

in, she can talk to you  
she can give you certain  
points which might make  
it easier for you. She  
feels confident that in the  
long run you will get the  
job - but this other man,  
being on the spot - has  
of course been able to  
inject himself into the  
situation. I hope they  
send for you soon because  
I feel sure your  
personality and power

will override any seeming  
difficulties.

So let me know when  
you are arriving - I will  
be able to talk to you  
better than writing -

All good wishes to  
you and your wife -

Herceiros de I - Costa

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

V

41-81

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

38

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

May 10th, '41

Mr. Harold Sherman  
380 Riverside Drive  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Harold:

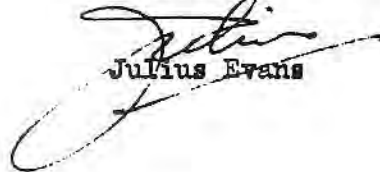
At Mr. Lasky's house this morning, (since this happened to be Saturday), he told me of your phone conversation last night---and asked me to mail the enclosed check for \$700.00. This will take care of the advance for your first week's salary and also your traveling expense, as per your conversation. Mr. Lasky was most anxious that you receive this as soon as possible in order that you may start for the coast as soon as you can arrange to do so.

We're both delighted that the time has finally come---and that we'll all be working together in the very near future. Be sure to let us know when you plan to leave and the time and place of your arrival.

VITAPHONE

Kindest regards to Mr. Lark and yourself.

Sincerely,

  
Julius Evans

P.S. Don't want to write any more because I'm anxious to  
have this catch the next airmail east.



CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

# WESTERN UNION

1204

SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter

NT=Overnight Telegram

LC=Deferred Cable

NLT=Cable Night Letter

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R. B. WHITE  
PRESIDENT

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FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

205 DZ 11

HOLLYWOOD CALIF 542PM MAY 14 1941

HAROLD M SHERMAN

ON SANTAFE SUPER CHIEF WESTBOUND DUE 530AM 15TH  
BARSTOW CALIF.

WELCOME TO CALIFORNIA JULIUS EVANS WILL MEET YOU LOSANGELES

STATION REGARDS

JESSIE LASKY

646PM

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

41-85

41-90

May 15, 1941.  
Noon on the Desert

Dearest:

Speeding along at from 95 to 100 miles per hour, which I find this Super Chief makes in great long stretches, is not conducive to writing in long hand or by typewriter. The coach jounces so that my fingers aim at one key and hit another.

Now, as I look out my window I see snow-capped mountains of Colorado, for the first time, in the distance... against a blue sky... a magnificent sight. The foreground is green desert grass, with occasional herds of cattle and horses feeding on it. I see by the Rocky Mountain papers that unseasonal HEAT has caused the snow to melt and pour into the rivers causing floods and washing out bridges. We are just coming into yj (see what speed does!) into this territory. (I think I prefer flying!)

It has taken me several hours to rt (damn!) type the enclosed..and any idea of creative work is out of the question as far as recording.

I was awakened between 4 and 5 this morning, our Eastern time, 2 and 3 this time, and impressed yj to write, scribbling with difficulty. I was not conscious of voice but the thoughts were there. They seem y to me unusual and I desire your evaluation.

Really, this writing is a job...long chains of snow-topped mountains now. Oh, hell - we went around a bend and I almost lost my typewriter! It's no use!

But my thoughts are with you constantly, sending streams of love your way...to yourself and the girls.

We're due at Albuquerque late this afternoon and perhaps I can get this off airmail there.

The bedroom is much better than the roomette. I can stretch out here in the daytime.

Love again -  
Harold

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

41-~~PC~~  
Switch 91  
Wong pay →

May 15, 1941.  
11:45 P.M - Pacific Coast  
Time which is 4 Hours  
Slower Than N.Y?

Dearest:

I have had quite an amazing day and though I am tired will try to get across the main events.

I received this wire, delivered on board the Santa Fe train two hours out of Los Angeles this morning: "Welcome to California. Julius Evans will meet you Los Angeles Station Regards. Jesse Lasky."

The Mosses were at the station to meet me also, pleasant, willing people whom I had to thank and dismiss with Evans waiting to take me in charge. He couldn't have been nicer...wanted to take me to the Chateau, a rather ritzy place where he said Howard Koch was stopping...but I steered cleared of this...looked first at Highland Hotel which is a walk-up to higher set-back levels and walked a good two blocks, no exaggeration, to room on top floor at top of highest hill. Did not take it. Evans let me get idea of values and took me four different places until I landed at these Apartments which are grand. I have a living room, kitchenette, bedroom and bath, all furnished, for \$60.00 a month...bed in the wall in living room, which can accomodate you and the girls when you come, temporarily, second floor, just a block off Hollywood Boulevard in a refined, quiet, homey apartment house which you would like.

This as cheap  
as I could  
get single  
room in  
higher priced  
places --

Later Evans drove me up on mountain top to see his own home - a dream of a little place which you and the girls would have said is just what WE are looking for. We could see from his front piazza over the mountains below, into the valley of Hollywood suburbs below...and then range after range of mountains beyond in the purplish distance. He says its a marvelous sight at night...he has planted a profusion of flowers, has a little garden, sun porches...etc. (Incidentally, this apartment house has a sun roof which has a view in four directions that is wonderful and which would thrill the girls.)

I had a two hour conference with Lasky late this morning...lunch with Evans...and then back for another two hour conference topped by being taken to Lasky's marvelous home in Beverly Hills where had dinner with his wife and son, Billy. There are two boys and one girl who is eighteen. The boys are several years older, both in pictures...the girl a fine pianist...Mrs. Lasky a really gifted painter who showed me marvelous spiritual mural...and who made a surprising comment to me in a moment alone, when she looked at me and said: "Mr. Sherman, you are just the man to work with Mr. Lasky...to do fine

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

*Cont'd from two back  
pages*

-2-

spiritual things in pictures. You are all right...I know you from other planes." Lasky later said that he has mentioned many celebrities and has brought many people out whom he felt meant something...but the moment he mentioned my name, Mrs. Lasky showed immense interest from the start and asked all about me...and said "that man has something." She claims to be deeply intuitive and feels she gets inspiration from higher intelligences. I think you will like her very much.

Mrs. Lasky spoke nicely of Miss de Acosta and said she was a fine person. Incidentally, I got a wife from Miss de Acosta on the train which said: "So glad you are arriving. I feel sure everything will work out as you wish. You have a very good champion in Bessie Lasky. All good wishes to you."

Mr. Lasky's secretary, Mr. Rogers, a fine middle-aged man, all his associates whom I have meant possessing really high qualities of character...confided to me that he had read my book, "Your Key to Happiness"...that it had been a God-send to him...he is being threatened with a nervous breakdown, fears death, etc...is so anxious to get some time with me...doctors, psychiatrists, etc. have failed to help. He says, "I have just been living, Mr. Sherman, until you would get here. I have been on the point of committing suicide. Please don't say anything to anyone. Even my wife doesn't know the hell I'm going through."

So - it looks like there is work to be done.

I dropped Loose a line which he will get in the morning.

I could not be treated more considerately and things could not have gone better this first day. The first need here is completion of a treatment to submit to Warner Brothers which Lasky feels will clinch the deal. Please report to Lask for me on Monday morning. Tell him the Gallop poll is amazing...it states that nationwide interest in a Mark Twain play is enormous with people in all walks of life. I can feel some real powers at work and of course can hardly wait to hear from you. I've got some tough days just ahead of me...but will write as often as I can.

Much love to you all and my one great desire is to speed the day when you can join me!

*LOVE again - just for you Harold*

*Please phone  
Sam Amery  
and give  
him what  
news you  
think best!*

41-97

May 18, 1941.

Dearest:

It is now 7 p.m. and I suppose you are still at the Wandermans...and I know how lovely you must look... and wish you were where I could put my arms around you... and kiss you...and tell you again and a gain how much I love you.

I have just had a wonderful afternoon with Harry J. Loose. He drove 23 miles across Los Angeles to see me in my apartment - said he wanted to be sure I was in the right place, that it was very important...He approved of it in every way and said he left power and protective vibrations with me...which I feel. He said also, "Don't be lonely"... and I assured him I was not...that I have the best feeling inwardly I have ever had, which I was sure was true of you, too. He said, "That's fine, Harold...that's real development. I know how much you and Martha care for one another...and how hard it is to be separated...but you're not, really...and you won't be physically very long."

Harry said he thinks you will be forwarding his last letter, addressed to you, to me soon. I think he may be writing you again.

I wrote all morning on the treatment I am finishing for submission to Lasky later this week, which in turn must be submitted to Warners as the basis for the deal. I stopped at one o'clock since I knew Harry was coming at 3 or thereabouts and spent the rest of the time in preparation. During this period of meditation, the enclosed came through and I was impressed to read it to Harry as soon as he came in. I did so, and he sat and wept like a child. "Harold...oh, Harold...it's been so long...we've come such a long way together," he said. And, as he departed, just a few minutes ago, he said, "I hope seeing me has not disillusioned you. It has been such a trial to me, knowing what to do. I must not hinder your development in any way." (Remember Gouphier Lewis of Marion Telling us of remarkable messages Dr. Sadler was getting in Chicago? He's one of group working on book "Uranian"!!)

Harry says he is happy to know we are planning to locate here with things working out right. He feels there are forces out here that we are to unite with in the mission we are to perform. He says, also, that he wants me with him when he passes to the Second Dimension. He looks forward to this as a great occasion.

There is so much I could tell you which cannot be communicated in writing. I am working night and day to do my end of this creative job so that things can be pressed to a successful conclusion. Everyone is being most considerate of me and Julius Evans as well as Lasky have phoned to invite me out, thinking I might be lonely today...How little they know!!

Write me as often as you feel the impulse...it helps.

*Harold*  
*the weather has been manicures as if to make up for last time. Love to the girls and yourself! Write how much to report that work for few days. Your first 2 letters received.*  
*1-5. make your part - and do that things are going through here in the night way as they should. I am being guided against pitifully I am sure - another are many in Hollywood! Ambitious people who would cut other throats.*  
*Should be published this fall!*

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

~~49~~

41-101

May 19, 1941.

*Personal - for the most part!*

Dearest:

I am rich - three letters from you today! I think the letter from H.J.L. was one of his best - and his stressing of my need of you in every way is certainly true. It emphasizes all the more my early recognition of that fact...my knowing that, if our lives were not to be together...I, myself, would be lost. I refuse to be concerned about future states...that I have you in this life expression is sufficient evidence that things will be as we would desire, if we fulfill our missions here.

I cannot let myself go on paper at this stage because so much depends upon my finishing the first part of this job and moving developments along here - which will speed the time of your coming...and I am consequently busy day and night...and, incidentally feeling fine...with a greater sense of power than I have ever had.

That was good news about the two books...and I wish you had phoned Charles Ronayne about the interest of the Publishers Digest in the condensed article I made from my book, "A New Philosophy of Selling". I am writing and sending him a copy of the letter so he can pass it on to the Funk people. I know there will be strong reader interest in such a book, properly advertised, when I can hold an audience like the Sales Managers Club at Albany spellbound for almost two hours. I, too, hope, for Charles' sake, that he sells both books for me. He deserves a break himself.

A cute announcement card from the Bryant, Juniors! I had seen it somewhere before...but cute just the same. I will write your father soon. A nice tone to Ruth's letter and so glad we were able to do what we did for her! Mrs. Belcher certainly belched in that feature article!

A word about Mrs. Lasky...she will bear watching since she makes a plaything of her spiritual knowledge. Some of her concepts are good, the ideas she expresses but they are involved with an unstable and unsatisfied emotional mechanism which gives her terrific drive and an urge for conquest...which over-rides such a mere conventionality as the married state - but all under the guise of spiritual attunement, etc. The tragedy of the middle-aged woman who refuses to admit it...who wants the attentions of men, etc. and has to spiritualize the approach to salve her own conscience. Does this make her sound pretty bad? Well, can I

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

-2-

give you a better picture when I tell you that she reminds me, in many ways, of a second Mrs. Wilson of Marion? My suspicions were aroused the first nice evening at the Lasky home...I checked later with Miss deAcosta, who said that was one of the things she wanted to warn me about...that Mrs. L. could be a great force for good if she was on a person's side...and had to be handled with kid gloves, etc...that she had read my book and had kept after her husband to get me out here...and would like me to know that she was the one who put this over, etc. etc.

The situation doesn't worry me in the slightest...but it requires tact...and a playing dumb on my part, since I don't want to offend her...wish to be appreciative of her interest...but without getting involved. I just tell you this on the strictly q.t. so you can be prepared when you arrive in this town where most women wear colored pants or slacks...where the sun shines all the time when it doesn't rain...and where the damnedest assortment of birds chatter all hours, making more noise than the traffic on Riverside Drive.

Referring back to Mrs. L. wouldn't Elsie Forbell scream if she could know that her prediction of a woman playing an important part in my life might have taken this interpretation? How valuable is a sense of humor...and HOW NECESSARY that we be developed to be on guard at all times against the motives, hidden and otherwise, of most people. H.J.L. commented on this yesterday and warned me to keep my own counsel and listen to my C.

I will be interested to know about the Wanderman evening. Wish you had a picture to send me in your evening gown. (Although I think you know how I prefer you in private! There's been no improvement on nature's style)

Tell Marcia she was right - I did VERY LITTLE looking out the windows on the entire trip...except when I was in the dining room. I tried to work, even though writing was impossible...and my room was on the sun side. There's a four hour difference in time now and that means 9:30 her time is 5:30 my time...often a difficult period for me to "tune in". But tell her she's doing all right...and to keep it up. (I kept window blind down much of trip...and wanted really to see countryside with family if I can go back over route with you!)

The  
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Hollywood, California

-3-

Of course this is the indefinite period which I am striving to get through as quickly as consistently possible.

I found a ~~restaurant~~ restaurant called Gourmet's on Sunset Boulevard, a three blocks' walk, where I think I will eat most of my dinners...remotely like Allies Inn or Stouffer's...the nearest approach here, I think...and prices reasonable. Most of the eating places here are either swank joints or sandwich counters.

I haven't been around any to speak of - just sticking to my apartment and working.

Am to go to the Brown Derby for lunch with Bob Longenecker tomorrow (remember him - he was in charge of my Key to Happiness program for a time with Kieseletter - a swell fellow) (*now in charge Myron Silznick Radio Dept. - one of biggest Hollywood agents*)

I don't have Jimmy Kemper's street address with me...he's on west 72nd Street...you might look it up and send it to me in next letter. I neglected to call him before leaving...I mean - I phoned and he was not in...but let Keith McCloud, the radio man in the Henry Souvaine office know. (*you might phone Keith and give him my Hollywood address*)

I told Charles Romayne, if he had good news, he could have you send me a wire or - if he would need to talk to me, he could come out to the house, I suppose, and phone through. He might shoot a wire first to say he was phoning at certain time, so I would be on hand, should there be points he needed to clear up that quickly. Or else he could have operator keep trying till they got me...(which, on second thought is no good because, if I were out for evening, it would be 4 of 5 your time!)

I feel that more good things are getting ready to happen...and, of course, am crazy for the day when I can give you the good word to come along!

Please phone Lark's office again...he's in on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays...to say there's nothing to report yet except work on the treatment, and that as soon as I have anything resembling real action I'll be writing or wiring him.

Love to both the girls...and I will let you sense the love I hold for yourself. *Howard*



The  
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Hollywood, California

50

41-103

May 20, 1941.

Dearest:

A nice letter from Mary just received and consumed with enjoyment. Tell her I am being taken to the West Side Tennis Club, the swank movie colony club, by Bob Longenecker, with whom I had lunch today at the Brown Derby, wearing my new brown sports suit, to synchronize with the eating house.

Bob is leaving soon for New York to take charge of the Myron Selznick agency office for the summer. He is supporting his father, mother, brother and two sisters on his earnings out here and says it's the only place in the world to live.

I was amused at Thomas's discovery of the electric light switch. If there's any place in the apartment he hasn't turned inside out to see what's there, it'll be a miracle.

This morning, before lunch, I finished plotting the balance of the Mark Twain story and feel I am being inspired, for some grand ideas have come to me. I am sure Harry Loese is helping...he said, as he shook hands on leaving, "Harold, you forget me right now...you have a job to do, but I won't be forgetting you!" He may bring Ma Loose to spend part of next Sunday with me. I'm going to try to save Sundays for such contacts...and maybe we can, too, when you are out here.

Last night I went to dinner with Ruby Skelly who is now secretary for a writer in 20th Century-Fox. She insisted on my reading her highlights from the treatment, and said, "Harold, I truly mean it - you have one of the most wonderful stories laid out there I have ever heard. Don't let them botch it up with their crazy Hollywood ideas of "technique", etc." A suggestion was made by Lasky's associates that I would have to put more "menace" in the story...but nothing artificial or Hollywoodish of that nature must go in this story! Ruby's mother and sister both had serious operations for cancer recently! What she has had to go through! She says it's a wonder she survived...and attributes it to the strain the whole family was under for the past few years. She looks much better herself.

*Good from Robert E.  
Key had night + some  
and had had motion some time  
Am standing at window  
I hope when she comes  
WCP intend*

Jimmy Kemper has written me a pathetic letter concerning the "let-down" he has gotten through the Henry Souvaine office...how they have kidded him along on the sale of his program...and now he knows there's nothing definite in the wind. Keith McCloud, whom I liked so well, has written me also that he is leaving, and is forwarding the radio material to me. Bob says, if he were staying here, that he could seal the program easily...that they eat that kind of presentation up out here. (MY program!)

You might phone Jimmy and tell him I had lunch today with the Radio Director of Manager of the Selznick office and will be playing tennis with him tomorrow and will speak to him about Jimmy and his program. Jimmy wrote me that he had met a man from the Selznick office in New York who was returning to Hollywood, whom he wanted me to see for him. Bob Longenecker, (coincidence) is the best contact Jimmy could have with his office...and he will be in New York soon. Jimmy's phone number is: TR-4-1422. I will write him later after I have seen Bob again. (Pretty garbled as I re-read but I guess you will get it)

I am feeling fine and should have my rough draft of treatment done in next several days. Then I will go over it with Lasky and if he likes it in the main - perhaps we can get real action the first of next week!

Ruby says what I am writing is practically a shooting script and I should get an adjustment, if it is acceptable, running into real money, for the time already spent, the months of work...she says it would cost the studio with an ace writer around \$30,000 to \$50,000 to get what I will be giving them...and I should ask for at least \$25,000 even though I'm not a name Hollywood writer. At any rate, I am holding the thought that the right thing will happen all along the line...and how EAGER I am to get you all out here!

*P.S.  
Tonight  
Charles Wilkins  
calls on me  
with a "girl  
friend" who is  
taking us to  
her home for  
cold buffet  
supper. I  
will be just  
time of hand  
then -  
she's great  
chered at my being there.*

I want you and need you in every way and my thoughts and feelings of love must be making a direct line to you. It was fine hearing from the girls and tell them, when the writing pressure has let up a little, I'll answer their letters. I try to think of Marcia at her prescribed time but it is often difficult...but tell her it made no difference in my work with Wilkins...that she may get impressions from me just the same. Love to all - Harold

53

41-112

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

May 22, 1941.

Dearest:

It's 92 degrees out right now and was hot last night. The bedroom in this particular apartment is a little warmer than ordinary because the incinerator is behind one wall and it is in use up to noon, making the closet, particularly, like an oven. This again is supposed to be "unusual weather" and the colored maid has just finished telling me, "this ain't nothin' to what it'll be in September and October...it'll be really hot then!" Sunny California!...But there's been plenty of sun this time - nothing else but - and HOW! Usually, in all honesty, a cool breeze...and it is considerably cooler at night! They say this unseasonal heat means earthquake weather...and I am awaiting a tremor with considerable interest. The maid tells me, in the bad one several years ago, her little boy ran to her crying: "Oh, mommy, call the police! Call the police!" "I told him," she said, "Sonny, there ain't nothin' the police can do about this!"

Keep this biography of Wheeler. You can't tell what the next few years may bring and I did do an immense amount of work on this thing...he'll never miss the script.

Somewhere in my room, in an envelope, perhaps on the desk, or down in the right hand end of the cabinet, which contains a carbon copy of the musical comedy idea, "Dough, Ray, Me!" New musical picture ideas are scarce in Hollywood and I might be able to sell this in a hurry for a good price. A few things like this, of mine, may have a real salvage value, as I get settled here. I hope Capt. Waters can send me the original.

I know things are in a mess in my room...and don't try to do much with them...I would like things equal to the same things to be together, if possible - if you know what I mean!

I am taking Twain's life, simply and directly right from the start and letting it unfold as lives normally do. Lasky wanted me to jump in at the middle and go backwards and forwards...and this mechanical treatment would kill it dead. This is to be no Orson Welles fantastical! I am working in my own apartment and have not seen Lasky since the first day and night, although he phones me every day or so...and I am now about two days from the finish of the first big job. But WHAT work! The birds get you up at dawn, as well as the sun, so you might as well get busy. I see Howard Koch at dinner tonight. I see his new picture release, "Shining Victory" gets good reviews, so Howard has apparently hit a stride.

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

-2-

I don't know the details about Lucy May. Hardy is in some private school here and Howard sees him once every few weeks...but I infer that Howard is just as pleased, or more so, that Lucy is taking a "vacation". He said she might come on to New York, he didn't know her plans. Howard's last picture was written with a Miss Froelich, his secretary whom he brought from New York and on whom he is supposed to be...! I think your other questions have been answered by letters passing in the mail.

Keep some of the pamphlets...again you can't tell what's going to happen along some of the lines we have thought about...I wrote Harry Barnhart so he would receive a letter around his birthday, May 23rd.

I am waiting to write your Dad and Sarah the moment things have come to a conclusion out here and we know definitely what to plan on.

I am enclosing something that seemed to come through last night and am also returning Loese's letter for our treasured file of them...also his notes to me which I have thought you might like to see. If he should write you further letters, perhaps you might exchange them with me and I would send back to you...but I hope that this procedure won't be necessary for so very long.

I am feeling fine - but, of course, miss you greatly...although I am being sustained. I can feel a Presence with me which is a great help.

My love to you and the girls...I had a good feeling about Charles Ronayne yesterday...hope something is really developing there.

My - if my mind can be free to enjoy a trip with you all...and come out here - knowing we're coming to something glorious all around - it will be too wonderful for words!

I hold you in my arms and kiss you and tell you again you are the only, only one in this whole world for me!

Howard

41-114

11 P.M.  
May 23, 1941.

Dearest:

This has been my first chance to write you today. I have been hitting this typewriter steadily, with but two hours interruption around dinner time tonight, since 6 a.m. and have accomplished a terrific lot.

I have practically completed ~~what~~ what amounts to a shooting script that runs 246 typewritten pages and will probably require 30 more before I am finished.

I have done this enormous amount of work in this time - and am feeling amazingly fresh and well - because it would otherwise have required 6 to 8 weeks normal expenditure of creative energy...and while this isn't what Lasky expects at this juncture...he doesn't know enough to know that the Twain material cannot be handled in simple treatment form and demonstrate adequately what can be done with it. I hope this is the last great effort of this kind I will have to put forth... and when I have completely proven myself, that I can relax into ordinary creative activity?...and get some measure of enjoyment out of living as well as working.

Dialogue as well as business is written...and while it is overlong, nothing is left to a producer's imagination as to the tremendous dramatic possibilities in Twain.

Lasky is to go over this with me some time Sunday... so Loose was right in feeling that this week-end might not be a favorable time for us to get together.

I have worked like this to provide whatever shortcuts I can to our being together again SOON. Certainly I should begin to know something next week as to plans, with this work accomplished.

Tonight, Howard Koch phoned around dinner time and asked if I would like to see his new picture with him, "Shining Victory". Miss Bayard, McCollum's secretary, was coming over to bring my Kinsey books which I had ordered and I had asked her to have dinner with me. I took her to Howard's picture and then she drove me back home where I have been working since. The picture is excellent until it gets toward the finish when it weakens in my opinion. This was the first time Howard had seen it...not having seen it in production...and apparently many writers are employed grinding out scripts and don't follow through on production at all. This is not going to happen on Twain. Too many things occur when you turn scripts over to others - especially important scripts...

I had dinner with Howard last night at the Chateau Elysee, a swank place with beautiful grounds where he lives. He seems as natural and nice as usual...but doesn't talk much about Lucy May and has no idea when she is coming back, etc. so I have little to report. He claims he is doing what he can to get Evans out here... please look in directory and get address of Evans George Wash. hotel.

I promised to write Evans after I had seen Howard.

Don't worry - I observe much - but talk little -  
to anyone!

I'll hold this letter until the first mail tomorrow  
morning to see if I hear from you and have anything to add.  
I expect to finish this work tomorrow...and wish I could  
find some one to play tennis with after that...Bob's been too  
busy to play.

\*\*\*\*

No letter this morning ...and am holding till the  
11 o'clock...when if there is no mail I will not hear until  
Monday.

Eureka! I have just finished - at 10:30 the entire  
job - first draft. 264 pages, which is 80,000 words in a  
little over a week - easily up to my old production records...  
and I am feeling fine...though fingers of hands a bit lame  
from constant typing.

I wish you were near enough so I could HUG you!

\*\*\*\*

Just a note from Wilkins on this mail to say he'd  
be in Los Angeles tomorrow - Sunday night - until June 2nd,  
when he sails for Japan. He is stopping at the Jonathan Club  
where Charlie Whitmore is quartered.

Perhaps, by the next time I write, I can have  
more definite news.

Love to the girls...I'll have more time in a  
day or so, I hope, when I can write them.

*How good it will be when we can be  
together out here! My love and feeling for you  
can't be put in words —  
Harold*

41-120

May 25, 1941.

Friend Lark:

How busy I have been since getting off the train in Hollywood. I have actually worked from 6 a.m. until 11 p.m. every day, and completed a 264 page outline, typewritten, of the complete possible scenes for use in the Mark Twain picture. Of course we have immensely more than we need, but now it's in dramatized form ready for selection and condensation and the working of out an actual final treatment. This represents 80,000 words, as long as a good-sized book - and Lasky and his associate, Julius Evans, were bowled over today when I read it to them.

"I'm inclined to believe we have two pictures in the life of Mark Twain right at the start," said Lasky, "the first ending after his marriage to Livy and his occupying of the house given him by Langdon...I'll take it up with the studio tomorrow and see what they think of this idea."

Meanwhile I had a long talk on the phone yesterday with Bruington who said: "That man Lark is pretty damn smart...he can smell a stall 3,000 miles away! I've been working with Warners all this while over these copyright technicalities and they keep saying it's unfortunate the will of Mrs. Paine wasn't probated... some creditors might show up to demand unpaid bills, etc... and I can't come to grips with them on closing the deal, as yet. Lark told me on the phone they were just looking for an "out", for the time being...and maybe, they are waiting till we get a final treatment prepared to show to them!

Personally, I think the wire you sent, telling them I was working on a detailed treatment, caused them to think I could help in closing the deal by coming out here and finished the work...I estimate it will take me a week more to have something final to show...meanwhile, I am to be kept on salary until the deal is closed, which Bruington feels should certainly be accomplished by June 15th!! And maybe lots sooner.

It is true that Lasky's picture, "Sergeant York" is said to be a corker, which is increasing his prestige...and he is ripe for the big Mark Twain production. I think things are going through okay, but I'm certainly glad I've got your wise head in the background to counsel with and protect me... If they contact you, please advise me at once of the nature of

their communications so I can check with you and tell you whether everything is as represented.

I could not have been treated nicer by Lasky and his associates and I am nicely situated at these apartments, with a living room, bedroom, dinette and kitchenette...so I don't feel cramped...and yet this much space is possible for what it would cost to live in a swanky place...Plenty good enough.

So far as I know, Clara doesn't know I'm here...and I want to complete all this preliminary work and get things set, including the deal, before I see her. Mr. Lasky instructed Mrs. Lasky not to say anything for the time being.

As soon as financial matters get on an even keel and I established a checking account out here, you'll be hearing from me. What is your home address, please, in the event I would want to reach you there?

This is the first time I have had anything worth reporting, except hard work. But I have been trying to shorten the time of negotiation, so that they couldn't say we were holding up the deal from our end. I wouldn't work this hard as a regular thing for anybody...and I couldn't physically keep up this pace. But with things settled, we can live and act normally.

I hope I will be seeing you out here later. The weather has been grand - most of which I've had to enjoy from my window to date.

May I thank you again for all your great kindnesses and services to me. I am striving night and day to justify your faith in me...and I am sure, irrespective of myself, for the protection of the Estate and the right way that the Twain life should be done - someone like myself is certainly needed on the firing line. If I had time, I would tell you of some of the well-intentioned but screwy suggestions that have been made me for how I should write the story!! I assure you we are going to have a thrilling dramatization when it's finished and it's not going to be degenerated into a cheap Hollywood edition! My best to Miss Kiehn and Miss Starr...and affectionate regards to you....



The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

60  
47-123  
41  
May 25, 1941.

Dearest:

I have been reading my script to Mr. Lasky and Julius Evans from 2 o'clock until 6 p.m. without stopping...having gone 264 pages to get one very over-long continuity of all possible scenes to be used in Mark Twain picture... a job now that I don't see how I ever accomplished in the time...and which amazed them both.

Now, the usable scenes have to be selected from this mass of material, and built into a compact story...but my own mind feels fresh and released, for I have carried all these details around in my head and could not arrive at this point any other way.

Lasky says he will see if the studio won't consider two pictures on Twain - one ending at his marriage and getting the house as a gift from his father...and the other picking up from there.

I talked with Bruington yesterday and he says the details of the deal are still being worked on with Warner lawyers and himself...but wonders if they aren't stalling a bit, maybe until I get the final treatment done, since he thinks they are taking an undue amount of time over copyright difficulties. Perhaps I am a bit impatient because of my eagerness for us to be together...but I hope no long delay of any kind results. My pay is to continue until the deal is closed when new arrangements will be made, so I am told.

I feel just a bit woozy in the head right now and have a need for something on my stomach...but I wanted you to get this much of a report on today's proceedings. I'll try to write Lark a note later tonight.

It has been a beautiful, cool clear day out and I was up on the roof this morning, enjoying both air and view - and imagining how nice it will be when you can all be here with me. My love to you all...

Harold

6  
41-134  
May 27, 1941.

Dearest:

A satisfactory conference with Lasky and Julius Evans yesterday wherein we all agreed upon a method of treating the Mark Twain life story and I am at work again boiling down and selecting the episodes we now want from the full treatment prepared. I should be on the last end of the first big job now.

Last night was spent pleasantly in the company of Lasky and Wilkins, who were friends of long standing. Wilkins insisted on taking us both to dinner at the Hollywood Roosevelt, about four blocks up tor Boulevard from here. Later in the evening we went to a news reel theatre where the "Jumping Frog" contest was shown, at Angels Camp, in commemoration of Twain's story, with prizes awarded owners of frogs jumping the furthest. Lasky has started a news clipping file on Twain and is astounded how he is constantly being mentioned in every way. George Ade is behind a Twain Lore movement in the middlewest, which is being climaxed by a conclave on June 21st, and Lasky is now planning to attend it and possibly make the picture announcement at that time. That's back in Indianny...and it's possible he might want me to go with him.

Howe's letter arrived this morning and I am enclosing the carbon of the letter I wrote to Ronayne. Tell Charles not to be discouraged. I have a better feeling about the possibilities of the other book since its presentation is not involved, nor was the subject matter so difficult to present. Don't you think my attitude is right on the Wilkins' book? ...Isn't it strange - but everything I have achieved has had to be the hard way? I've long since gotten used to it...but folks outside will never know the terrific amount of work which has gone into many things of mine...the enormous expenditure of effort on many plays which have never materialized, etc. etc. all to some preparatory end. You must be made of some pretty solid stuff to have seen your visionary husband plunge into all this work which has netted so little in dollars thus far!

No letter from you this morning but expect it will arrive on the afternoon mail. I am returning your first handkerchief, with thanks for your second..and apologies, too, for the condition of the first. I have had it with me at all times. It is a pretty poor substitute for YOU!!!

Well, lets hope we know something more definite before long...giving thanks, meanwhile, that we are being cared for in every way. I will return Loose's note soon...talked to him yesterday by phone...they may come next Saturday. LOVE-Hauled

41-137

May 28, 1941.

Dearest:

Well, the news is better this evening. Bruington dropped in to bring me my check for \$490.00, minus the \$10 for last two weeks Social Security...and told me he had been with Warner Brothers attorneys all morning and had finally gotten their acceptance of all clauses of the contract. He is to prepare final draft now for their okay as to phraseology and is then to send to Lark for signing, when the deal will be consummated. Warners has agreed to complete the deal by June 15th, with payment of first check for \$25,000. You might phone this news to Lark, to whom Bruington is sending airmail special letter, a copy also to his home, knowing that Decoration Day is coming. You'll have to reach Lark at his home - Hackensack-1876. He should have received a letter of mine recently. Give him my regards...and tell him that things have at last begun to move here...and ask him to please co-operate on his end so they will have no further excuse for delays. (You might read him this first paragraph)

This naturally makes me feel much better. I have had no basic doubt that things would go through...and I still don't count it accomplished till it happens...but delays and this indefinite feeling are not pleasant - particularly when you want to have your family with you.

Bruington says he sees no reason why I should not be able to take time, with the deal closed, to come back or meet you part way...and if this Mark Twain gathering at George Ade's home in Indiana takes place June 21st, Jack Warner and Lasky might want me there with them, when the big announcement would be made of the picture's being produced. I suggested that Russell's sculptored work be used as background for the title: "The Adventures of Mark Twain" at the start of the picture, fading out the other characters and bringing Mark's statue into the foreground for a moment before going into the opening scene. This will be a break for the eccentric Russell if they decide to do it as they'd have to buy the rights from him.. but it would make a novel opening...I will be able to use the Halley's comet scene but not at the start, the way I'm planning treatment now...and it is too long to take time to describe at present as I'm under pressure again to finish this next assignment, boiling the whole thing down and following definite sequence.

My salary is to continue and then be taken over on some new basis with Warners...and I might get a bonus for work already done. I'll leave that in the lap of the Gods. It is a boom time for writers out here at present and if I can make good in a big way, the sky would be the limit. I'm just trying to contain myself, not overreach, and remember that we have other goals as well as the financial, in life. "The financial will be adjusted to our satisfaction"...Esquire gave me a laugh...I must catch the mail with this and get a bite of dinner...ALL my LOVE!

Harold

70  
41-139  
May 29, 1941.

Dearest:

I am glad you are keeping certain close friends like Sam advised of any news you think would be of interest because I simply do not have time to write. I want to write Cy and Jacques...but would rather wait till I have final news here. I meant to send yesterday's letter special since Decoration day might prevent its delivery...so will send this special and it will probably beat the previous communication.

What I had said in this letter was that Bruington dropped in yesterday afternoon to say the deal was going through, the last legal hurdles were out of the way, and Warners had agreed to have things cleared up and check passed by or before June 15th. It should take a week to ten days to finish the job. I am to be continued on salary by Lasky until then, when I will be taken over by Warners on a deal yet to be made. You might phone Lark - Hackensack 2-1876 and tell him Bruington has sent him airmail special..urge him to supply what remaining information is needed so they will have no excuse to wait on us. (Disregard same instructions in earlier letter if this reaches you first)

I talked with Wilkins today and he approved of my working with Simon & Schuster. I think, myself, everything is working out for the best with respect to this book. There is a tremendous air show being held at the Santa Anita race track Friday, Saturday and Sunday of this week...and Wilkins just phoned back to say he was to be a guest and would take me with him Sunday. There will be the first public exhibition of mass parachute jumping in this country and you will probably see news reels of this event. I am looking forward to this with great interest.

Glad you sent check to Ronayne...he is trying so hard and conditions with many are still so tough. Jimmy Kemper writes me pathetic, appreciative letters. Phone him to say that Bob Longenecker is flying to New York Saturday and for him to contact Bob at the Selznick office the first of the week. I have had another long talk with Bob about him and Bob is familiar with his radio material which Joe Graham of that office brought out here.

Incidentally, Jimmy added a postscript that I am recopying here which may be very significant:

"P.S. You have heard me tell, I believe, of my friend...one of four of our greatest secret service men...he has every medal to be had from US, as well as China...He ran in on me this afternoon for an hour. Says Gibraltar and Suez could be taken tomorrow by Germans if they wished...That England is doomed...that we have serious trouble ahead here...that I should by all means get away from N.Y....as all Christians should...said get West or to the country...His information makes the hair stand straight on my head..."

I feel that this information was meant to be passed on to us - as a confirmation of certain things that are happening in our lives - and the protection that is being given us...

I rented a radio and listened to Roosevelt's speech. I don't know what else a President can do with world conditions the way they are...certainly we can see what happens to other countries which are unprepared! The radios out here are easy to dial - you just push a button!

Rena's letter was the classic of all time. Nauseating, in fact. If I had a wife like that I would take delight in kicking her where her brains really are... and then walking out on her forever. (Serves Larry right!)

Your pick-up of my thoughts has been perfect. Interesting news about Little Cow - and the fact that she has attracted a Little Bull, as well as a job. Now maybe the Estes can start borrowing from her!

Glad you put Dean off as it keeps us free of obligation - which is a grand feeling. Wait till I get out from under the money obligations. You'll see a new person.

Yes, Potter should get his material back. Let's see - is he stopping at the Ansonia? Yes, at 2701 Broadway...I forget what street intersection...you might take a street car ride down there some time and drop it off at the desk, in one of my big envelopes with his name on it. Don't make a special trip.

Somewhere among my material is the radio script of Emerson Evans' on Alice in Wonderland. If you find that, let me know...and it can be left at the City Club for him, along with the book. This is a dirty ~~trick~~ to leave you with such little details to do.

Tell Mary to keep at her tennis. She'll love the courts out here, which are kept up much better than those at Rips.

Charlie Whitmore keeps in touch but is most considerate...and happy at prospects.

I must go to the bank now and deposit my check. Please let me know how much of this \$490 you would like and I'll send you a draft. I am waiting to hear from Lark to find how he wants me to send his money - and where.

Love to all...with extra special love for you!  
I'm sure it won't be so long before we'll be able to be together again...and it makes me so happy!

Harold

*glad you've gotten some new clothes! and the curls too!*

41-141

May 29, 1941.

Friend Lark:

Now the "slick work" begins to come to the surface. Bruington came in on me yesterday, nice as sugar, and said everything had been ironed out. In the course of the conversation he said, "you know, I think I'll simplify the contract with you and the Estate by drawing up a separate contract with you, purchasing the rights to your play on Mark Twain...and then a contract with the Estate purchasing the rights to the material in the books, etc. It will mean the same but it won't be so involved." I told him that you would expect the contract to be submitted as it was, with the changes you had dictated, and he said, "Oh, you think he would? Well, okay, then!"

I could smell a rat, that Lasky thought or they thought, if they could make a separate deal with me, Warners could throw me over, once your deal was set, and say, "we bought the rights to Sherman's play - now we don't need him any more"...and they could make use of the enormous amount of chronological work I have done with the Estate's material...and the great amount of work I have done out here - on the theory that I have been paid for this... (which has only been in part)...and which I was to retain the rights to IF the deal did not go through. But once the deal has gone through - Lasky and Warners get the right to use this material and **COULD USE IT FOR PICTURE PICTURES**, with Sherman completely out of the equation IF you, with your foresight and fairness, had not written me into this basic agreement!

Bill Harbut, veteran Hollywood writer, has just left my apartment house. He has been a friend of long standing and I took him into confidence. He said, "Harold, you absolutely need an agent out here for protection against these Hollywood wolves. Every person of standing has one."

Bruington had said to me, "Harold, I don't think you need an agent at the start. Mr. Lasky and I can go to bat for you on this personal deal with Warners, after the big deal is set. Of course we may not be able to get you a bigger salary than Lasky is paying you at the start...but if we can get you a term contract with Warner's at \$500 per week for the first year...this should be all right. We'll try to get you a substantial bonus for all the work you've done for which you haven't been paid...but you shouldn't push Warner's on this... because if you don't get it now, I'm sure they'll appreciate what you've done later and pay you for it...after the picture is out." (Should I have faith in promises out here?)

It is quite evident to me that Lasky is going to try to turn over as big a bargain buy to Warners as he can - including the writer - and that I would be sacrificed in the deal to get Lasky what he himself is looking for. Certainly I could not expect him to represent me as he would himself... why should he?

I think Brington is afraid I will get me an agent who can advise me what I really am entitled to on such a deal.

Bill Hurlbut tells me that \$500.00 a week is considered chicken feed on a writing assignment of this kind and that I definitely should get a much better salary for working on the shooting script.

I got the tip while still in New York that Lasky had some other writer in mind to work with me on this material...or even to supplant me - after they have bought the use of the material. He has only suggested someone else once and then quickly side-stepped it...

You know me pretty well by this time, and you know I will not be arbitrary...you know also that I will not do anything which in any way permits the injury of our Mark Twain material...at the same time permitting certain concession necessary for dramatic license. But we must not let this situation get out of our hands...and I must go along with this picture to the finish!

For this reason, I feel that you should hold the main contract until you are advised by me that my personal contract has been settled fairly and to our mutual satisfaction.

In that connection, I am wondering if I should act upon Mr. Hurlbut's advice and call in a good agent or author's representative out here who knows the ropes, to counsel with and help me negotiate the proper deal at the proper time. I do not feel that I can afford to give him another ten percent under our present arrangement...but Hurlbut thinks this man can get me a higher figure...and I wonder if it would be acceptable to you if you would take 15 percent of my salary from the time that Warners close a deal with me and let me pay the agent the other 10 percent? The higher figure, if obtained, would bring you probably about the same return and not take any more from me. Or would you split the cost of any agent with me on this end of the arrangement?

I'm sure you realize that putting myself trustingly in the hands of Lasky, despite the fact that he is extremely nice to me, is not wise. I have made mistakes of trusting people who have been nice to me before - and I want to be sure I am starting RIGHT out here with what I really deserve.

Your own advice and counsel will be much appreciated. I wish you were here and on the ground. I am sending a carbon of this letter to your office, hoping to reach you reasonably soon with one or the other. I have about finished a condensed treatment now from a very full one I prepared originally. Have worked from 6 a.m. until 11 most every night in attempt to speed things to satisfactory conclusion. Please inform me where you wish remuneration sent and how made out. My best regards and deep appreciation.

Sincerely,

41-144

May 30, 1941.

Friend Lark:

Your wire just received and shall follow instructions. I am taking for granted that you are well enough known in Hackensack to permit delivery of this airmail special. I posted letter to you last night which you should receive at the same time since I noted that the Hollywood mailbox pick-up does not occur until 3:35 p.m. this holiday from 8:35 last night - and this present letter will be in the box ready for the same pick-up. Some service out here! This is the mailman's perennial holiday.

In thinking it over, since my earlier letter, I want to be sure that you don't feel I'm getting any exalted ideas as to my own worth out here in this city of goofy people...and, as I assured you before leaving, I shall make no move of any kind without consulting you... and getting your counsel and permission.

I am sure that you hold a "whip hand" in this deal by the very manner in which you have laid it out, which should compel them to treat me properly in order to get what they want! And, while you are three thousand miles away, this power can be felt here IF, on advices from me, you feel they are not offering me the proper arrangement for my own services. I want you to know, also, that it is not my desire to have an agent...I should be happier if I could be free, under your own supervision, if we both of us can get what we are entitled to in the way of consideration on my own writing contract. But I wanted you to judge the situation from your knowledge of how deals are put through and the nature of the people... and tell me frankly what you think we should do.

An agent is certainly going to try to get as much for us as the legitimate and deserved traffic will bear, since it means more to him...but will Lasky and Bruington die for our alma mater as gladly? Or will they sacrifice us, on the personal writing contract, making a showing by saving Warners some thousands of dollars on this end - which they otherwise would have to spend for writing services...by turning me over at a salary far under what a writer should be getting for doing this job?

Of course, by implying that we have complete faith in them and expect them to do for us as they would be done by - we are putting them on the spot in a certain way...which might cause them to come through, as they should. If you feel this should be our procedure, without a possible monkey wrench in the form of any agent, however good and well-intentioned, I will abide by your own advice. Bruington himself, voluntarily said, that the amount of work I had already done, would save any major studio, on this job, around \$20,000...and this is why he said I was entitled to a bonus. Obviously, some such consideration



would mean much to both of us...

Bruington says, "we would try to get some adjustment on the work you have already done at the same time we set your writing salary..." but, he went on to say, if they couldn't arrange anything, he was sure Warners would voluntarily do something for me later. (I have had such promises before, and am wondering if NOW is not the time when all matters like this should be properly adjudicated?)

Out here in Hollywood, writers are judged on the basis of the amount they make per week. Five hundred a week is obviously big money to me in consideration of what I have made in the past few years...but it is NOT big money as writers go here...and, in fact, a writer drawing this amount is not even considered a first ranking man.

A writer is always hired for a new job at the last salary he received from another studio. Bruington said, "we might be able to make a deal wherein Warners takes you over for the amount Lasky is paying you and the last week you work for Warners we UP your salary to \$1,000 or \$1,250 so when you are hired again - you will start at that salary!"

Funny business, isn't it? I would rather get \$750.00 or \$1,000 regularly, if I am supposed to get that, because of the quality and character of the job I am on, than any such trick arrangement to give me higher consideration later.

I have worked terrific hours here, in order to do in two weeks what would have taken six...the kind of work I couldn't physically keep on doing...and which they must not and cannot expect. I am told this is bad psychology...that a writer must not turn in too much work.

FLASH! AS WALTER WINCHELL WOULD SAY...Have just had a long phone conversation with Dave Diamond, William Hurlbut's agent, who is extremely well regarded here. Bill had referred him to me without saying more than that I had a deal with Lasky on Twain. Diamond said this: "Sherman, whether I do anything for you or not, because Bill Hurlbut is such a good friend of yours I want to tell you this - Bruington, Lasky's lawyer is a crook. Don't believe any soft syrupy things he says to you. Two years ago I was called into his office and offered a substantial sum of money to go on the witness stand and state that it was my opinion a certain well known director was "washed up", in order to help Bruington win a case against him. It is to his and Lasky's interests to deliver this deal as cheaply to Warners as they can...and they'd freeze you out of it, if it was to their interests to do so in a minute. They are smooth operators, no matter how nice they are treating you on the surface."

Of course, you've known Lasky from away back, when he tried certain things...this is surely a merry-go-round... but if it honestly sounds like an agent like Diamond would help us, lets stand the extra expense and know that we'll be protected.

Please wire instructions so I'll know what to do if things come to a head suddenly. Best to you again!

41-148

June 1, 1941.

Dearest:

The weather report for tomorrow was cloudy and Sir Hubert phoned to ask if I could go to the Air Show today instead of Sunday, which I arranged to do, going by streetcar down into Los Angeles and meeting him at the Jonathan Club where a Mr. Johnson joined us who had loaned Wilkins the car yesterday - and all three of us drove out to Santa Anita race track, which is beyond Pasadena, a distance of about 20 miles, along a four-lane highway - and beautiful scenic views in the distance. The grandstand where we sat faces the distant range of mountains, a series of them which tower into the sky and melted into a haze which cleared as the afternoon went along and the sun sank lower, giving us unexcelled vision for the mass parachute jumps - white puffs against the mountain green and purple... an exciting sight! The bodies come hurtling down, turning end over end and suddenly bob into an upright position as though attached by invisible strings to the heavens. One girl made a delayed jump and didn't open her parachute until she was less than a thousand feet from the ground. She was traveling at the rate of 165 miles per hour when the chute opened like a cannon cracker and she came within inches of straddling the white racing fence, escaping with an injured ankle. The soldier parachutists, most of them, alighted on their feet in amazingly agile fashion. How they all hit the inside of the race track, popping out as they did when the transport plane crossed over at a fairly high altitude and with a little wind blowing, was surprising. I could see how difficult it would be to shoot down several hundred of such men jumping at the same time. You wouldn't know who to draw a bead on before they'd be down and ready to shoot at you!

Stunt flying by Tex Rankin, the world's greatest and one of Wilkins' friends, was easily the hit of the show. He did things with an airplane you wouldn't think possible - climbed perpendicularly and let his plane slide back down on its tail, levelling off so close to the ground that you'd swear he was going to crash. Or he would turn upside down and race over the field at an altitude of little more than a hundred feet above ground, if that. Or he would hedgehop, just missing trees or going between them with little to spare, or flying at a 90 degree angle, with the plane almost standing on one wing... Or doing an outside loop, one of the hardest feats in aviation... think this one out... a few years ago, until Rankin did it, no one thought it could be done. Of course there was precision flying by army air corp planes, beautiful to watch and various other forms of air acrobatics but these were the highlights... and, as usual, wished you could all be here with me.

It's hard to tell you without going into a lot of detail what I'm doing on the treatment... but Lasky wants the best dramatic episodes tied together in some vital way... and I've completed 70 pages of a job, the framework of which he has okayed. The work is supposed to take around 100 pages... I am prepared to have more ideas and suggestions made... and will be glad when final contractual arrangements have been completed so I will know where I stand permanently with respect to the creative job I am doing.

? Yes - it was "Raccoon" Turner day and I met the famous Oscar Turner who has endorsed the "Whistles" I got - I wonder if it'll make them taste any better?

I ran into Howard Koch and Hardy on Hollywood Boulevard last night. It had been Hardy's birthday the day before and Howard had taken him to the Air Show. They intimated that Hardy might like a sport book or two of mine and I said when I brought my books out here I'd see he got a delayed birthday present.

But Howard advised I have an agent represent me and said I should not be led to expect "pie in the sky" by Warners or any other studio treating me right - later. That now was the time to make the right deal...and he didn't know any writer of standing who didn't have an agent. This confirmed Bill Hurlbut's own advice. I wrote Lark, asking what I should do about it. I definitely feel that I should not be expected to pay out 10 percent more of such money as I might get...and asked Lark, if he felt it was necessary, whether he would take 15% on my Warner salary and let me give 10% to the agent...or whether he would split the agent fee with me...It means a good deal to him for me to get the proper writer deal here...as it does to me.

Dave Diamond, Bill Hurlbut's agent phoned me...and said, confidentially, that Bruington, nice as he seemed on the surface, was definitely a chook...that he called him in several years ago and offered a substantial sum of money to him if he would go on the witness stand and testify as an expert that a certain movie director was "washed up". Diamond pointed out that Bruington, as Lasky's lawyer, could not go to bat for me...and neither could Lasky, since he was interested in making his own satisfactory deal with Warners as producer of the Twain play, when Warners would take over the contract. As it stands, I actually have no one to speak for me in court, who is vitally interested in my end of the deal, exclusively.

You can see that this is a problem...and while I do not mean to imply lack of confidence in Bruington and Lasky, who have treated me fine up to date - Bruington made a cagey suggestion a few days ago - that he draw up two separate contracts on the Twain matter, since the present one was a bit complicated. He would draw up one contract dealing with me only, buying the Twain play material from me...then another contract, buying the biggraphical material from the Estate. Don't you see what a slick trick this would have been! If I'd been naive enough to agree to it - they'd have edged me out of the real deal with the Twain Estate - and contended, at any future time that I'd already been paid for all the work I had done...or that they needed from me...and hereafter they were only interested in buying further rights from the Estate to make any further pictures. AS IT IS - I am right in the middle on not only this - but all other deals...and they HAVE to deal with me as well.

Elsie is right - there is a difficult period ahead which has to be surmounted...and when I am over that hurdle...things should run more smoothly. I didn't like the above suggestion, made in a "friendly" spirit...would you? I hope Lark isn't upset by what I wrote him...but believe he is a seasoned hand when it comes to dealing with these sharpers...and will appreciate what I am up against out here...I am deeply indebted to him and want to maintain his good will at all costs.

A nice note from Ronayne reporting on the Howe interview which sounds encouraging. Ronaynes were apparently helped immensely by the little check and am so glad you did it - also being diplomatic enough to refer to it as an advance against expected returns.

You have not told me yet your financial status and what you wish me to do with the \$490.00 I deposited here... \$31.50 of which I paid out for an advance against next two weeks rent and incidentals paid for by the apartment house people.

Monday noon I am having lunch with Dave Diamond, the agent, and Hurlbut, but will make no commitment or come to no decision until I hear from Lark. Those contracts in my file on the Twain deal and letters from Kyle, etc. are INVALUABLE. We'll have to be sure we have everything we want from the file, now overloaded with a lot of dead material...before we dispose of it. When we see what kind of a deal I land out here we can determine what to do with the furniture, perhaps.

I am enclosing an interesting article from this week's Variety...and see by tonight's paper there is a big fire in Jersey City. How glad we may be to be free of New York! If mother reads some of these things, she'll begin worrying about Arthur all over again!

How I hope things come to a head and can be settled before long...so we can know when to expect to be together again.

Don't be concerned over this "husband and wife" relationship. I think we've subconsciously been separating physical from spiritual when we are expressing through the physical on this plane of life...and are intended to express our love for each other to the fullest, whenever so moved to do. I says that's what our fine relationship is for...that we are so highly developed inwardly, we could not have lived with any average man or woman - it would have done something devastating to the inner self...but with the deep understanding we have...and the deeper one that is coming, it should only intensify our sense of attachment and need for each other in every way. He has stressed my need for you...and, in another way, your need for me is perhaps as great. This is not a one way proposition. I feel, as you do, that the knowledge which has come to us has help immeasurably during this present difficult period for us...

I doubt if I will need another handkerchief unless our separation is longer than I think it will be. I am glad you could feel the vibration from the pepper leaves. There are jarquand trees in bloom now - a bright purple - which is pretty beyond description. (I think I've spelled their name correctly).

never  
Sam - tell  
I got his  
etc - read  
out of this  
tell him I'm  
too much  
ever yet to  
etc. He may  
be actually  
in Wilkins & Armstrong angles.

I passed on to Wilkins Elsie's comment - and he said it was exactly the same as told him by another astrologer and that he had funds tied up in 4 countries now...My love to the girls... and a wealth of it just for you - a very special brand! Harold

Sam said in  
his notes "this"  
shaking things  
always happen  
to you - I see  
you - that  
why I think  
the "reality"  
will still  
that maybe I  
advise &  
protection

June 2, 1941.

~~48~~-150  
41

Dearest:

I have just talked with Lark in New Jersey and I feel better. He had received my letters and told me to ask Lasky \$10,000 for the work I have already done and he would back me up...also to tell him that I expect a good salary for my services when Warners takes me over...to represent myself with the "in" we have unless we run into some hurdles that cannot be surmounted without an agent. I perhaps have more power behind me than I realize...and I am trying to be passive and untensed...and have been, for the most part. For me to land on my feet out here and with a good contract - on my own - would be an unheard of achievement...

I knocked off and went to the tennis court again today - and played really phenomenal tennis. I believe these courts out here and the air or something has improved my game immensely. I really could beat anyone who plays at Rips on the number one court the way I am playing singles now...and this is no exaggerated statement. You have never seen me play this brand of tennis.

Am within a few pages of the finish of this condensed treatment...Lasky called for three-quarters of it yesterday...don't know what he thinks of it yet.

Had a long talk with Ruby Skelly on the phone whose mother is down in bed again...she gave me more good Hollywood advice...the kind you can rely on.

Am having lunch with Hurlbut and his agent, Diamond tomorrow...listening and keeping my mouth shut. Bill means very well and is trying to be helpful.

There is really nothing more in the way of news and it is getting late...to get to Gourmet's for dinner, I'll have to hurry...so will mail this on the way at the post office, sending my love winging through the air with it!

Hope to have the really big news before many days!

Harold

80  
41755

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

June 3, 1941.  
8:30 a.m.

Dearest:

Your wire came about a half hour ago but have waited for the mail before going out to send you an answering wire - telling you that I had airmailed a draft for \$125.00 to you yesterday morning. I suddenly got an urgent feeling and, while going to the bank with George Lark, had him wait while I got a draft for you and then drive me to the postoffice. Originally I had intended to do it later in the day, but it came over me that I shouldn't even take time to write but get it off.

I hope this was enough until my next check as I want to keep enough in the bank here at first to make a good impression. I think it was your turn to make an error - I've made enough of them. In a short while, if all goes well, we won't need to worry about overdrawing.

I may pay the tennis bill from here since I promised to write the boys. Do you have a slip as to the amount? I see by my calendar that Charlie's bank note is due again on the 9th of June, which means I'll have to apply \$25.00 more on it, I suppose. It will be a good feeling to clean some bills up, such as the City Club, which I can do by paying half and being credited with the other half.

I suppose a number of people are getting curious as to where I have gone. I would really like to drop a note to Jerry Dumars but only know his office address. Perhaps if I didn't put my name on the envelope it would get to him without anyone being the wiser. It wouldn't do any great harm for them to know, I suppose... but I want to be sure Harrison has cleaned up my note at the Morris Plan before he thinks I'm in the money. However, this should be all done by July.

I finally got around to writing Jacques and Cy.. I am returning Loose's note to you to keep intact with our files. Please look up my letter written to Lark in which our private financial arrangements are listed and write me the terms of our agreements again on the big deal. You will find all papers in second drawer of file, under Mark Twain...also tell me terms of split with Mark Twain Company. These papers are among the most valuable pieces of property we have and can be worth thousands to us in the future.

41-162

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

June 4, 1941.

Dearest:

Have just mailed you, airmail special, another \$125.00 which brings my account down pretty low, until the \$495.00 I deposited takes hold tomorrow. The bank out here is extremely courteous and accomodating. By this time you must have the first \$125.00 which was on the way a day before your letter came, so thought you would have it about as soon as the wired money. Of course I don't know how big a mistake was made - and unless it was a hundred dollar one this time - you should have had enough to cover! I wondered how you could do as much as you reported doing; getting needed clothes for self and girls, on what I left, and also pay current bills...but did not try to do any figuring at this end.

This man Diamond I mentioned as a possible representative, had had a feud, as I reported, with Bruington some years ago...and when I diplomatically sounded out Bruington ~~about~~ and found he objected to Diamond but to no other agent - I told Diamond today that no matter how good an agent he was, I could not afford to incur any ill will among men with whom I had to associate...Diamond was sore, of course, and put up an argument, but I stood firm.

I have not gone through what I did in New York with Joachim for nothing...and am moving more slowly. Reported this action to Harry on the phone tonight and he said, "Good! You are being protected!" He is coming over tomorrow morning and we hope to get in half a day's visit before I am called to the studio in the afternoon to meet a writer with whom I may be asked to collaborate. I feel he is reassured now over your attitude. He is so very conscientious about every move he makes and so careful. Two nights ago I awakened about 4 and thought of him strongly, would not have been surprised to have seen him in the room. Shortly before that time he had experienced a heart attack and had sent out the call to me. He says he is feeling better again the past few days. He is so anxious to be released, now that he feels his life work is done. A remarkable man, as you know, and I do not think he will seem any less remarkable on meeting.

Had a nice talk with Monroe Goldstein at Columbia Broadcasting, a swanky new building here, as is the NBC building. He said, "Harold, this is the place for you...you'll make big money out here...and should have been here before." He's going to take me out and show me his ranch and says he knows where to live and where not to...and will be happy to give us suggestions.

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE  
Hollywood California

-2-

To the question I asked Lasky about my ability to get away, shortly after contracts were signed, in order to bring family out here, etc. he said he didn't know...they might want full steam ahead so they could go into production on picture as soon as possible, in order to stage premiere as planned November 30th at Hannibal. But this picture game is so changeable...He doesn't realize how close we are - when he suggested it might be better to put three or four more weeks work on the treatment before trying to get away. Of course a good salary means so much to us now...if I can get you out here soon...and keep the salary going, it will be the biggest kind of a God send. I know Aunt Flora and Mother would be much disappointed if I can't get back at least that far...and a week-end might do it, with my flying back as far as Chicago. Anyhow, simply can't make plans much ahead. But I hope you will be ready to have furniture stored and start pretty soon when I am able to give the word.

(in body and spirit)

I am returning the lists you send with instructions. You certainly are rendering a yeoman service.

Mrs. Lasky called for me in her car this afternoon and took me to the home of a Mrs. Rollings who had studied under Junge (is that the way he spells it?) A Russian woman, quite well balanced. The afternoon passed pleasantly, harmlessly and rationally enough. I certainly have Mrs. Lasky on my side...and if we can pursue our policy of always trying to attract the best side of people in their contacts with us, maybe we'll be protected, most of the times, from the other side of them!  
At least it's worth trying.

Glad you read the letters to Sam. I suggested as much in a letter I finally got around to writing him.

The big plane had some defects show up in it and has not been tested yet.

You might phone Jerry some morning around 9:15 to 9:30 and ask him to give you his home address...that I want to write him. I like Dumars and he is trying hard to gain true knowledge.

I meant to listen to Reg'lar Fellers' hour and will if I remember it, next Sunday.



The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

-3-

We'll have a pretty big check to deposit reasonably soon...and then it will have to be broken up into some fair-sized amounts - to the Estate and to Lark. And I see that the Federal Government is getting ready to take plenty!...We'll have to put away several thousand of it in order to be able to pay the income tax when it falls due!

No, Loose did not come over last Saturday or Sunday as you surmised.

This is a jumpy letter, picking up odds and ends of your last letters and tacking onto my thoughts. Perhaps the information I asked for relative to the amount I am to pay the Estate and Lark on this big deal is enroute to me in a letter of yours...I think my memory is clear but I want it in black and white again. Please keep all this data together, you might put it back in Mark Twain file inside clean clasp envelope...big size. Rolo's has them if none on hand, as you know.

I seem to be caught up on my correspondence at last - and it's a good feeling.

Personal Item-- There is nothing wrong to full physical expression on this plane, and we should get any of those bugaboos out of our heads so we are not inhibited or retarded. I feel we are coming into the most wonderful time in our lives when full and complete physical and spiritual union will be increasingly necessary as the BALANCE between these two dimensions in which we function. The fact that we need some contact, at all times, with something intimately associated with the other, indicates how close we actually are in every experience here. It is a constant thrill to keep my body completely clean - for you - since I feel it belongs as much to you as it does to me...on this plane...just as I feel united to you in the inner sense...and I accept on faith, until understanding comes, that we can never be really separated in the dimensions ahead, no matter what interpretations may be given at present...There is a reason why YOU are YOU and I am I - and why we are differently sexed and yet ONE and the SAME in spirit, serving each other here. We couldn't be more happy or more blessed...and the wonderful care given us through everything is assurance enough for me!...So keep your love stored up...and let's look forward to even finer experiences in every way!

Goodnight, Sweetheart. I take you in my arms and feel your soft body against mine - and kiss you.

*Hawley*

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

41-103

June 4. 1941.

Dearest:

Just back from morning session with Lasky. He expects deal to be through by middle of next week. Wants me to collaborate with another writer. I am willing to co-operate in any way that still gives me good income at this stage of game...this is an enormous job at best and few pictures are done by only one writer out here.

I am on my way to the bank and will send you another \$125.00 if they will let me draw my account so low, with deposit of this new check for \$495.00

Later, I will send still more. Next week we shouldn't have to worry if deal goes through on schedule.

Apparently they want to rush right ahead on the creative work and I do not have any idea how much time off they will allow me - if any. But the main thing is for us to get together again as soon as possible.

I dreamed I had you in my arms last night and it was the grandest feeling possible!

All my love and then some!

In haste,

Harold

P.S. Must get to bank before it close.

P.S.S. Flat "mes. Harold M. Sherman

on the check looks mighty good to me! am rushing to meet Monroe Goldstein now  
what writing! Harold

41-165

June 4, 1941.

Friend Lark:

Had a long talk with Lasky today. Because of certain little irregularities in the copyright situation, such as Mrs. Paine not having her will probated, etc. Warner Brothers is being given a warranty by Lasky and by you, for the Estate, holding them free and clear, if any creditor shows up, trying to collect any money owing them by the late Mrs. Paine. It all seems like much ado about nothing - but lawyers will go to any lengths out here...and suppose such warranty means nothing to you since there's not a Chinaman's chance of any trouble arising. Bruington had queried you about this but you neglected to answer on that point...and he is presuming it is okay since WARNERS ARE REALLY RUSHING THE DEAL NOW, in order to make their plans to take advantage of George Ade's shindig on June 21st. Lasky expects the deal to be closed by the middle of next week - SO - if there is anything still to come from you - from HARPERS - please speed it along!

Lasky wants me to let him secure a Warner writer to work with me, which he says is usual procedure, and I have told him I am willing to do this.

He says he can get me no bonus - and said he would put me on the payroll at \$500.00. I reminded him that both he and Bruington had reiterated that this was only a temporary salary...that I was on a week to week basis rather than contracted for that amount so my salary could be UPPEd, when the deal was made. I told Lasky, if he could not arrange a bonus for the enormous amount of work done, even though a satisfactory treatment has not yet been developed because enough time has not been permitted... (I am told that the average treatment takes 6 to 8 weeks to prepare here)...that Lasky should go to bat for me and get me a higher salary as part compensation for work done and also for work yet to do. He said he would see what he could do and would let me know in time for me to secure the services of an agent IF I felt one was needed.

He spoke of a week-to-week deal but I smell a rat here...because, if they want, they could let me go, under those circumstances, make use of all I had done, deny me any credit as a writer on the picture. I think you can contend that, for the Estate's protection, you expect me to follow through - NOT ONLY AS A WRITER but as the ESTATE'S representative while the picture is being

shot, advising with the director and with Lasky. This assures us of protection and of staying with the job till the finish at the agreed upon salary.

Lasky claims that the reason he wants me on a week to week basis is because I can always call for a new deal, if my work is satisfactory and merits a higher salary, whereas a TERM DEAL sets my price at a certain figure for that period.

This man Diamond, whom I mentioned to you as a possible agent, is poison to Bruington - and no matter which man is in the right, I told Diamond I could not consider him as a representative if I decided I needed one later...since I was not going to get involved in person feuds.

The William Morris Agency we have had dealings with and quite possibly they would be the best. Lasky thinks I need an agent later - but is not keen for me to have one now. He slipped a cog and let the cat out of the bag when he said: "I told Jack Warner you were a 'find' and a BARGAIN at five hundred!" I told you I felt they were trying to cash in on us...but I think it is wise to be diplomatic...and if I could get Lasky to secure \$750.00 a week for me without an agent to start, I'd be inclined to accept it. At any rate, shouldn't I have the contract checked by someone? Perhaps not with you - but just to be sure it's okay.

Do you feel if I can get \$750.00 to start I should take it and forget any claim for a bonus? I don't want to seem high-handed at the start out here...but I do want to feel that we haven't been 'taken' far below deserved market values.

Please advise me at once about the above matters as things are getting ready to happen fast.

My phone number here is GRANITE 4171 if you should feel any necessity of calling. Best wishes to you and let's hope we can soon celebrate!

Sincerely,

~~File~~ - 166  
41

June 4, 1941.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
Warner Brothers,  
Burbank, Cal.,

Dear Mr. Lasky:

Charles T. Lark, executor of the Mark Twain Estate, and I, discussed some months ago in New York the unusual exploitation opportunities afforded by a picture based on the life of Mark Twain, under the title of "THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN".

It occurred to us that something never before done in pictures could be accomplished when the production is completed ready for distribution, through the staging of SEVERAL PREMIERES on MARK TWAIN'S next birthday, NOVEMBER 30th, 1941 - in the different cities and towns in which he has resided and consequently made famous, in one manner or another, by him,

These towns are:

FLORIDA, MISSOURI

MAINTHEAL, MISSOURI

VIRGINIA CITY, NEVADA

ANGEL'S CAMP, CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

ELMIRA, NEW YORK

BUFFALO, NEW YORK

NEW YORK CITY, N.Y.

and

ABOARD A MISSISSIPPI RIVER BOAT  
Flying Between St. Louis and New Orleans!

There are a tremendous number of episodes which will make grand radio material that cannot possibly be used in the picture. It would be the plan to secure a commercial radio sponsor for the life of Mark Twain and synchronize the PREMIERES with the opening, on the same night, of the first half hour radio broadcast - with RADIO PICK-UPS from EACH of the TOWNS where a PREMIERE is taking place! Getting the reaction of each audience to the picture, giving local color descriptions of the highlights of Mark Twain's residence in each city.

In this manner, the true AMERICANA of MARK TWAIN'S life is thoroughly impressed upon the entire country - with expressions of appreciation coming from distinguished persons in all walks of life as well as the average American men, women and children.

Radio and picture can work together - stimulating enormous interest and whetting public appetite to see "The Adventures of Mark Twain" in every community.

The same actor who plays TWAIN on the screen will play TWAIN in ~~radio~~ a radio version of his life - and wherever possible, other local characters will essay the same roles. This ~~permits~~ both the picture company and the commercial radio sponsor to make all manner of unique tie-ups between product and theatre in every town and city where the picture opens.

Such an arrangement can be explained on the basis that such a clamor arose from the different towns and cities who had a claim on Twain - that it was considered only fair to all that they had an equal opportunity of sharing the first showing of this truly American picture about a great American.

Since the English people loved Mark Twain - and some scenes in the picture take place in England - it would be a ~~fine~~ ~~thing~~ to have "MARK TWAIN" could open in London, England the same night. A cablecast broadcast pick-up of the premiere in London could be the high point of interest in the commercial broadcast...and this event alone would be front page news in every newspaper.

There are, of course, numerous contests which could be originated providing great publicity for the forthcoming picture. One of them could be a nationwide contest to secure the JUMPING FROG to be in the picture...with local try outs and regular events, presided over by judges, to determine the frogs making the longest jumps...and, through eliminations, bringing the winning owners and their frogs to Hollywood for a final contest...or to Angel's Camp, where the real frog story took place!

There is an old man, 92 years of age, now in Mrs. Ackerman's Rest Home, Altadena, California, who claims to have been captain on a Mississippi River boat on which Mark Twain was the pilot. He spins terrific yarns about his experiences and would be good for a story...a typical Colonel Sellers type.

The above suggestions may be of value to you and are set down for what they may be worth.

Sincerely,

91 4170-175  
June 7, 1941.

Dearest:

I am rich today after having been poverty-stricken all week. Three letters arrived, the Tuesday and Wednesday ones postmarked the same - 11 a.m. June 5th - so they obviously were held up somewhere...your Thursday letter, written before my phone call, came through on schedule.

I had a phone call from Lark today telling me Lasky had written - wanting to buy "Connecticut Yankee" for Warners also, with me as the writer...but Lark is telling Lasky "one deal at a time"...there's to be no job-lotting...and he's saying also that I am not happy over the amount being offered me at five per week, after all I have done, particularly since he (Lark) heard Bruington and Lasky distinctly say I was to be given a higher salary when the deal was closed. Lark is a corker. He said he actually had two other studios after "Yankee" and was going to make Lasky sweat a little....Lark also asked that I give him the \$250.00 due as he had something he had to meet in New York, so I phoned George Lark who drove over in his new Buick with his wife and little two year old daughter, Loy. The wife is sweet and the baby is adorable. Wait till you see her. George Lark is sold on a Buick...and tells of a friend who bought a new Studebaker, had it six weeks and traded it in for a Buick...so what are you going to do - throw some papers in the air with different make cars written on 'em, and buy the one that lands last? Lark says he gets 21 miles per gallon, which he claims is good enough. The fault he has with a Studebaker is the way it rides. He says for long trips it wears you out.

I am glad I held back sending you a larger amount till later this month because Lark's demand, bringing him up to date, would have made me too low in appreciation of my having a new account here.

I will pay the tennis bill from here and something on the Rialto bill, explaining to them where I am. You take care of the rest as you see fit. Weber & Heilbroners...what is the total? Probably your guess of around \$250.00 is about right. I'll pay something on that from out here, too, I guess. If the deal goes through next week, I may wait and pay it all a little later. My clothes have certainly been needed - and I've worn the sport outfit night and day.

Played a couple sets of tennis this afternoon but not interesting competition. I have to fit in where I can yet as I don't know many tennis playing people...and this isn't much fun. There are more women players out here so Mary will feel at home.

Howard Koch has invited me to dinner with Ellis St. Joseph, his writer friend, who is with RKO, and with Anne Froelich, his secretary, who may be the next Mrs. Koch, (a surmise) She wrote the last picture with him "Shining Fictory" and they have just sold an original story to Goldwyn, so Howard's

stock continues upward: "Sergeant York" on which he and John Houston were called in, promises to be a big hit - which also boosts his prestige. When you get started right out here - the money rolls in.

PERSONAL

I am nice and clean now, having climbed out of a tub bath, with hair freshly shampooed. It is five in the afternoon, sunlight bright outside, and sun setting in New York - and you three thousand miles away on whom this ultra clean body is entirely wasted! Well, it belongs to you, anyway, and the fellow who dwells inside it....I hope the monthly schedule works out right when we are joined again.

I received Howe's letter - very helpful and cordial. I will do the rewrite when I have finished the Twain job.

Tell Ronayne I am sorry the other book was turned down for his sake...the only regret I have, which amounts to indignation, is the fact that a publishing house can HOLD a manuscript on which a writer has spent so many hours of his time, at his own expense, this length of time - and then reject it. I think this is rank inconsideration...and presume he does, too.

I am sorry I was unable to get in touch with Joe Harvey. You might explain to him, if you get the chance, that I only had 48 hours notice...that I called Jerry Sunday because he had a phone - and asked him not to talk about it - as I didn't want any premature word to get out...and that I had meant to phone Joe during the day Monday...but was too rushed...and had to leave many things undone. (For your information - I saw no need to phone Harrison...he's shown no interest in me worth mentioning since ~~he~~ I left, as you know)

OH - see this week's news reel. It has pictures of the Santa Anita air meet - the crazy stunt flier...also pictures of the world's biggest plane. I saw the New Jersey fire scenes and they were terrific. You must have been able to see the smoke, weren't you?

I hope I'm not going to be barraged with people who think they can write for the movies now...and who think I need ideas. Mrs. Mac...and now Helen Dumas.

Too bad about Bill Ortmann. He used to kid me about my eating...and brag about the big steaks and beer and smokes he could consume. But all this, together with the nerve pressure he's been under, is taking its toll now.

I'll ask Loose some of your questions next time I see him. It's hard to plan ahead here..and will be until things are settled.

Well, I'll get this to the post office, with the hope it may reach you before Monday.

We have been getting each other's feelings exactly... as indicated by our letters crossing in the mails.

*Lone - Hauled*



4146-176

(4)

June 8, 1941.

Dearest:

Last night I read an unusual little book sent me by Mrs. Lasky, entitled: "Forever"; by Mildred Cram. It is published by Alfred Knopf, 1935, and you might phone and see if Knopf now has it in stock and buy it...the cost is a dollar, I think. It can be read in one sitting and would make an absorbing afternoon for your group of women...The subject is reincarnation and the story is beautifully told... Mrs. Lasky tells me it has been sold to the movies...and this indicates that many things of a spiritual nature are getting ready to be done. (Perhaps Brentanos would have a copy even if Knopf hasn't. They should be able to tell you where to get a copy, anyway)

Mrs. Lasky just phoned this morning to invite me to her home for dinner. She is being very nice and nothing out of the way has occurred. I think I am now established on such a basis that nothing but good can come from this contact... and I am sure she means to be most helpful. I will welcome the opportunity to talk to Mr. Lasky as I believe I have hit upon the device we have all been seeking to present the story of Twain's life...have Twain tell the story himself. I will make an extra copy of the opening and enclose with this letter to show you what I mean...With the wealth of material at our disposal, we have wondered how to cover the ground without taking up too much footage... now, with Twain to fade in at different points, with witty comments and philosophic statements, he can bridge these developments and highlight the dramatic moments of his life. Should this method be acceptable to Lasky, I will have solved the problem he intended to call a technical writer in to do...and may get the entire assignment myself, which I have been fighting for. I read my idea to Charlie Whitmore last night, who raved over it, and he seldom praises anything I do - to my face! Incidentally, he refers to himself as "Hohn, the Baptist" and says he had to do an awful lot of wangling to get out here ahead of me and pave the way for the arrival of "Jesus Christ." Read this to Sam - it should give him a big laugh....Charlie claims he actually thought I'd be coming out here, from indications, and went to work to get himself a trip to California so he could be here when I got here! He's sweet in his well-meaning blunt way...and said to me last night: "Harold, it begins to look to me like ONE horse I have backed was at last coming through. You've proven to be a real mudder...the track hasn't been clear any of the time... but you've kept in the race...and now, on the home stretch, you're commencing to emerge from the pack. And I'm here at the finish line, waiting to cheer you on home - having put all my money on you to WIN!" (The beautiful part of this is - it is literal)

This afternoon, before the Lasky car calls for me, I am to go with Bill Hurlbut to see the Pattons, friends of his who were so nice to me before. Mr. Patton was a wealthy retired ship builder and died several years ago...but Mrs. Patton and daughter still are here and seem eager to meet me again.

By the way, there is a sensibly presented article in the last "WHO" magazine, telling of the psychic activities of Stewart Edward White and his wife, Betty. I read with interest her developed ability at "astral traveling". There is also an interesting article following, called "Wagnerian Duet", telling of the harmonious relationship existing between Melchior and wife. When such a relationship exists - it exceeds any other happiness possible in this world. Get this magazine...Mary will probably admire the dogs in the Melchior picture...but Melchior is the greatest Dane of all - and the biggest!

With all our plannings, backward and forth, as the tide of developments has come and gone, it may be more practical to meet you in Indiana, if I can, and come back by train...or even by plane, if you could send enough of your personal effects through to this address by trunk. This is something you would probably want to do anyway. Then buy a car out here where it could be serviced for a year, free, and the dealer could be responsible if any defects appeared. I think we will know what to do when the deal is set...but I hope you will be so nearly ready to move that it will not take long to get under way after that. *(George Paul tells me that a black car is best to keep clean and that a dark blue gray is better - what do you think? We're getting plenty of advice.)*

I will want both you and Mary to take lessons in driving...and Marcia, of course, later, when she is of the age when driving is permitted. You will understand what I mean when I tell you that traffic regulations are the scariest in the world out here, once you have seen the way they operate. In New York, every effort is made to protect you against the errors of human judgment, by traffic-controlled lighting and signals...Here, it is just the opposite...almost everything is left to human judgment...you decide whether you are nearest the street intersection and can get across first, etc. Isn't that crazy? No wonder so many are killed, week after week.

It has not been hot here since I arrived...average daily temperature between 75 and 80, and cool at night. (Wait till you hear that damned bird across the street - keeping up an incessant cackle ALL day long. You get to subconsciously waiting to hear the next sound...and the next and the next...I understand other tenants are kicking...whoever owns the bird ought to be shot as well) Outside of that minor disturbance...you will like this apartment as a temporary residence...we are again favored, being only a block from all the stores you will want to trade at! The best typewriter and stationary store on the boulevard is right around the corner, as well as big markets, a five and ten cent store, and picture theatres...a news reel across the street on Hollywood Boulevard...

I haven't had an opportunity to look around much for possible home sites...but am sending you some clippings...the one showing expanse of windows and view beyond is thrilling to me. Wouldn't it be great if we could have something like that?

Isn't it nice that each time we are separated, we look forward to our reunion with even more anticipation and and enable definite plans! May this week bring a closing of the deal

All my love - Harold

*P.S. - I would have automatic writing material for time being. I have some 2 small sheets*

*Just an  
Sill can  
want to do  
or Roman  
ing go in at  
need note for  
have our lease*

4841-151

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

June 9, 1941.

Dearest:

I spent an interesting afternoon and evening yesterday - visiting Mrs. Patton and companion, Miss Charteris, both aged people, with Bill Hurlburt, in their home on the Vine Street Hill, which overlooks lower Hollywood. They told of an unusual occurrence which happened when Tom Patten was dying two years ago - of the chandelier above him, starting to swing back and forth. They thought it was caused, at first, by an earthquake, but nothing else in the house was moving... and the chandelier kept swinging, almost in keeping with the pulse beat, slowing down gradually, until it came to a stop..this motion lasting for from three to four minutes. Rather odd, don't you think? A force of some kind at work.

The Lasky car picked me up at 6:30 and took me to their lovely home in West Los Angeles, near Beverly Hills. It is a beautiful drive from here which takes about a half hour. I found a Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Berg (he's a composer) there; also Jesse Lasky, Jr. and his wife, whom I like very much, and Betty Lasky, the daughter, about Mary's age, who is very quiet and retiring. The most unusual personage of all was Mr. Lasky's mother, 82 years of age, who lives at the Ambassador hotel, and who always spends her Sunday evenings at the Laskys - has been doing it for years...and who is touchingly fond of her son and daughter-in-law.

I think this Lasky menage is the most extra-ordinary I have ever been in. It seems that every member of the family is on fire with creative talent in some direction... and whatever else may be said about Mrs. L, she keeps so creatively busy that one hardly sees how she can be up to escapades at the same time. She had done six new paintings since two weeks ago - and some of her work is really beautiful. The quantity of it is enormous - an entire room filled with literally hundreds of canvases...Now she is doing a mural which has to do with the creative forces in the universe...and which she has tried to express in a prose poem, set to music by Mr. Berg, which actually forms the basis for an unusual ballet. I suggested as much last night after hearing it and Jesse, Jr. joined me - the whole family getting so excited they are going to get Nijinsky (wife of the famous Nijinsky) out to hear it soon and arrange for its being done in the Hollywood bowl. This idea of mine proved a ten strike, I having made an especial hit with Mrs. L. who is delighted at the prospects.

The  
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Hollywood, California

-2-

You will like Jesse, Jr. who is a marvelous mimic and who entertained with his impressions of Cecil B. DeMille, for whom he has worked...and who apparently is a dual personality, acting all over the place when he wishes to impress people with his authority, bawling actors and writers out for no reason at all...and being very sweet when no one else is around to see him blowing off.

From Mrs. Lasky, the mother, who took me home in her car, I learned much, since she is most talkative - all in praise of her son and talented daughter, who died seven years ago. It seems that Jesse and this daughter both were brilliant musicians and had intended to make their careers in music. They came east and there Jesse got an idea for unusual musical acts in vaudeville of a high class nature...they became so successful that he soon became the biggest producer of them in America...and later, when movies came in, he had a chance to found Famous Players-Lasky, utilizing his developed stars - practically a who's who of the industry at that time...this led to Paramount-Lasky and ownership of 1500 theatres throughout America... and finally, after a series of successful pictures and all kinds of showmanship, wherein Lasky brought the biggest stars from Europe, including Maurice Chevalier, etc. the crash came, then the depression which kept theatre managers from paying their rentals...and, in one terrible week - Lasky found himself wiped out - with a loss of \$7,000,000 in cash!

"But it didn't feaze him a particle," said Mrs. Lasky. "Nor his wife. She just said to him, 'Jesse', we've had fourteen servants and five cars and all that sort of thing - but that's never meant real happiness to us...it's just each other and the work we are doing and ~~an~~ family!..and so they moved to humble quarters and he went to work harder than ever...and, since everybody in Hollywood loves him and he is known as the man without an enemy...everyone wanted to give him a chance to come back... which he is now successfully doing.

"My husband died years ago and Jesse said to me then that I wuld never have to work, though I wanted to.. that he would always take care of me...and he has, despite all he has gone through. Oh, I tell you he is a wonderful son...he sends me flowers every year on the

The  
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Hollywood, California

-3-

anniversary of his father's death...and he's had me go with my daughter-in-law and himself to every opening with him of all his pictures...and he says, 'if mother doesn't like it, never mind what the critics say, it won't go'... And I used to say to him, sometimes, when he was working so hard, 'Oh, Jesse, I'm afraid you're not going to make a success of this, it's too much'...and he would say, 'Mother, you mustn't say that - it must be a success - we'll keep working at it till it is'...and this is just the way he'll be on 'Mark Twain'...he's like a bull dog...when he wants to do something and believes he can, he never gives up... and when he believes in people, he backs them up and inspires them and gets more out of them than anyone else... and when someone in some other studio does something good, he sends them a wire of congratulation, which few people do in Hollywood, which tries to drag the other person down rather than build them up."

I think this is enough of Mrs. Lasky's running fire comment to give you an idea of what she thinks of Jesse, who is still "her boy". But there is something fine about real Jewish family life...their loyalty and devotion. (It hurts to think if reportedly true - and the reports are fairly widespread - that Mrs. Lasky is emotionally not all that could be desired. Certainly I have seen no evidences of it, as yet)

Oh, yes, her other son, Billy, is assistant director at Warners and was away on location. I understand Betty is quite musically inclined...that Mrs. Lasky is herself a fine pianist...and Jesse, her husband a fine all-around musician. Jesse, Jr. is a linguist, who speaks five languages. How do these Jews do it? You have to give them credit.

The morning mail has just come. I am really waiting for Julius Evans to call and take me to Warners where I am to confer with Lasky on the idea I sent you with respect to Twain presentation...no chance last night with the company.

I certainly got an avalanche of letters today: Rongore, Keith McCleod of the Henry Souvaine office, Cy, Vera Murray, Ed McCallum (who has kept up a string of wise-cracking letters in answer to mine)(he is now in Detroit) Sam Emery...and yours.

I will hold this letter until later in the day so as to write you about the Lasky conference.

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-4-

Ronayne, writing for advice on the book situation, had this to say:

"Thanks ever so much for your letter, so friendly in its atmosphere and so dynamically inspiring in its tone. After having read it several times over I felt more keenly than I have ever felt before that you are a decidedly helpful person to know, and indeed both my wife and I feel that our friendship with you and your family is one of those unusual blessings that stand out in one's memory of one's life. On her behalf and on my own, let me say that we are heartily glad we know you..."

Personally, I would rather receive this sort of appreciation for us than the plaudits of the world.

I am glad you feel there is an improvement in my voice, indicative of a more poised manner. I would not be as conscious of that as you or anyone else might be, who knows me.

I think Mrs. Loose can well be a fine guide for us since she knows "The Book of Urantia" as well as Loose does, so he says...but not so much about his inner development and the personal side of his relationship, some of which is apparently forbidden to her. At least, she will not talk about it to anyone.

It is good that you are buying what you feel you will need. All my clothes, as I have said, have stood me in good stead. I wore my gray suit for the first time last night, and it looks stunning... fits well. I seem to weighk as much on the scales, dressed, but don't feel as heavy or full around the waist.

I suppose you are finding out what storage will cost as well as shipping costs, crating, etc. I think, without doubt, we will be locating here as a place to live...so probably should bring on our furniture or be prepared to, as soon as we can find a suitable place.

About Marion - despite insistence of Mother and Aunt Flora - I am determined to go to the Spencer hotel and avoid any trouble or confusion at all. We certainly can control this equation and enjoy a few moments to ourselves at the same time. Gives you a real feeling of independence while visiting.

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-5-

1:30 P.M. Am just back from morning conference with Lasky and Evans at Warners... am able to draw relaxed breath for first time since arrival in Hollywood - since the presentation idea I sent to you, embellished, received great acclaim...and they agreed this is the vehicle for which we have all been looking...the technical manner of telling the story.

This is the technical problem for which they considered bringing in another writer to help solve...and I am greatly relieved to have been given the inspiration to find the way myself...for I have never lacked confidence in my ability to do the entire job...and knew I had been pressing too hard, feeling the accumulated economic strain, the responsibility of making good, etc. etc....and, as I look back, it's a miracle I've been able to do as well as I have, under the constant pressure I've had to work for so long.

But now I can see daylight and have won the renewed confidence and respect of Lasky and Evans.

You might phone Lark and thank him for his support of me relative to my personal services...and explain what was happening and how I have surmounted that difficulty now. The remaining job is to relate the dramatizable episodes to this manner of presentation and we will then have a finished, acceptable treatment. ...Evans tells me that Warners still may demand a collaborator, just as a matter of regular procedure... but that I had a champion in Lasky who would stand out against such an intrusion on my own creative work if he feels the finished job is okay. Personally, with the foundation properly worked out, as it is now, I see no reason why another writer should be called in at all. In which event - when a deal is closed - I should be given a better salary. NOW, there is every justification for my being considered in a higher salary bracket for I have demonstrated that I can create the proper technical devices of story treatment necessary to pictures.

Lasky expects the deal to be closed this week, he reiterated to me. I hope you can feel my lifted spirits. My love goes to you in ever increasing amounts!

Harold

Lark is  
home  
Tuesdays  
Thursdays  
Saturdays  
at office  
Mondays  
Wed  
Friday  
Home phone  
Hollywood 1876

41-182

June 9th, 1941.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.,  
West Coast Studios,  
Burbank, California.

Dear Mr. Lasky-

I just returned today and find your letter re the encouraging news as to probable closing with Warners at a very early date for production of a picture based on the Life of Mark Twain. I hope you can arrange matters satisfactorily with Sherman as he does not seem to be very happy over the prospects for his bonus and proper pay for the future, and I know you did not want him to feel that he has just been used to enable you to close your deal with Warners, and I am sure you will do the best you can to see that he gets a bonus of at least \$10,000. for the months of work which he has done and which I am sure will have much to do with your being able to successfully close the deal, and he should have assurance of proper compensation for the months to come. Personally, I think that if this assurance does not come from Warners it should come from you and your associates.

As to Connecticut Yankee, I have had three requests for that during the past ten days, two from Hollywood and one from the East, and I think I told you of one or two additional inquiries since I told you last fall that I thought the Ritz brothers, or some such combination, could put out a very successful production based on the Yankee. Personally, I feel we should culminate one job before we talk about the second, as of course, it was decided that you, Clara and Sherman should sit on the lid so far as safeguarding the interests of the estate are concerned.

With best regards, and every good wish, I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Charles T. Lark)



The  
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41-183

June 10, 1941.

Dearest:

My Mark Twain file will need to be brought with you, the one containing contracts, letters, wires, etc. as this is very valuable to us. I also want the official records of my Wilkins experiments, the original documents contained in the envelopes in top drawer of file...and if you can have things packed in boxes so that all are tied together that pertain to one subject matter, it will be easy for us to sort some day and dispose of what we don't want - which goes for correspondence also. I presume the file itself can be permitted to retain most of its material. I gave you the key to it, you remember, and it can be locked and later shipped out to me. All you have to do is push that knob in to lock.

I see by the date line that we have ~~only~~ five more days, within which time Warners is supposed to close the deal. That it is going through there seems to be no doubt...and my hitting upon the acceptable manner of presentation in advance of the deal is going to prove most helpful to me, I am sure...increasing their confidence in my capacity to do my end of a difficult writing job. As I have said before, I couldn't have been treated nicer.

Had dinner with Bill Hurlbut last night, who has been grand to me and whom I am sure you will like very much. He writes the smart drawing room comedy type of thing well...and I told him about my VanDorne and Wives idea which intrigued him very much. Will you please look up my synopsis on this and data concerning it, and mail it out, together with a copy of "Some Do and Some Don't", the ism play? I am going to try to capitalize on what I have done as Howard Koch is doing...and if Bill Hurlbut wants to do a play or an original based on "VanDorne", I'll let him go ahead and split fifty-fifty and consider it by-product returns. Anything you have done before entering a writing contract can be sold, if acceptable...just so you are not working on something new in addition to your contractual assignment. Please send this material airmail.

I will send you \$250.00 when I have deposited my next check and you can then give me an accounting of what you have paid and intend to pay.

Howe, in his letter re: Wilkins book, said he would be more interested in an account of my own experiences, with Wilkins story included. I have written Ronayne suggesting he look over copy of "Adventure in Realm of Mind" and decide whether he should let Howe see this for critical opinion.

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Just to make the car 41-184  
decision tougher - a  
Mr. Stockford who has dealt in  
all kinds of cars says the  
Chrysler or De Soto is best +  
fluid drive fine for family use -  
that hydromatic drive is bad but  
not fluid - easier car for women +

I am more and more inclined to think it is all to  
the better part of wisdom to get a car out here and drive  
come by train. It takes a lot of pressure off in many ways  
and possible things that might go wrong on delivery of car etc. 50

It may cost us a couple hundred extra, with  
my joining you in Indiana, but perhaps this is justified  
as an investment in our own happiness...and as something  
we should do with relation to Mother and Aunt Flora at  
this time. I think I would fly back to save time...to  
Chicago - maybe to Fort Wayne, if I found I could get  
accomodations through...and meet you in Marion when you  
arrived on the through train. Had we been permitted  
enough time...we might have gone up to Traverse for a week  
from Marion, perhaps to Detroit and flying up...but I doubt  
if this will be possible. At any rate, with everything being  
settled here, all these possibilities can be ironed out.  
With Rena in Traverse, I wouldn't go within a hundred miles  
of the place. When did she say they were going?

About the car - remember Ed McCollum said we  
could trade his car in and make a saving. I've written  
asking him about it. He is only interested in getting  
his second hand price from car and I would not hesitate  
to take advantage of the offer if I could save a couple  
hundred on the deal and give him what he wants, too.  
Ed has become quite a correspondent, exchanging wisecracks  
from his different points enroute. Apparently he is also  
interested to know how his new secretary is making out...  
and wants me to go over and see his place, which I have  
not done.

We can live here very reasonably and fairly  
comfortably, I am sure, for the first few months, while  
we are deciding where we will want to locate permanently.  
I don't think we should hurry this decision until we are  
sure. They say it takes from 60 to 90 days to build a  
home, if we should want that done. It doesn't seem long.

I will have to work at the studio when the  
deal is set so will need a car...and suppose we will  
have to have two cars eventually - perhaps a coupe for me.  
This is practically an essential out here. There are 1,700,000  
cars in Los Angeles county alone! And all of them are out  
on Sunday!

I'm going over to the Buick agency soon and  
look the cars over out here...send me your data on what  
you and Mary wanted in a Buick again. ALL my love

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The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

99

41-186

June 11, 1941.

Dearest:

I was supposed to see Loose yesterday, if not then, today, but he did not appear either time and I have just phoned him. He said things had come up to prevent but he had set next Monday morning, June 16th, as the time for he felt there would be something worth celebrating by then. I told him the deal was supposed to be set before June 15th, and he said, "that's it."

Lark has just sent me a strong letter he wrote to Lasky, telling him he expected <sup>me</sup> to treat me right in appreciation of all the work I have done. Thank heaven this "timing" is right because I have now supplied the acceptable idea for the presentation of the entire story and, as I emphasized before, have increased their appreciation of my value. Had Lark urged this before, they might have felt his idea of my worth a bit excessive. Lark also reminded Lasky that Clara, he and I were to look after the interests of the Mark Twain material, in referring to "Connecticut Yankee" and saying that he felt we should close one deal before talking about another...but isn't it nice he included me in this set-up which compels Lasky to keep on dealing with me! If this goes over as it should... it looks like I will have interesting things to do for some time to come!

Last night I went with Howard Koch to the home of his friend, Ellis St. Joseph (a "homo") and his mother, where Howard's girl friend, Anne Froelich, and a Miss Caspera (spelling probably not correct), both writers, met us. I had a miserable evening, mentally and physically. It was a drinking crowd, not excessive and no one drunk, but in good spirits...and a smoking crowd...and the old nicotine poisoning got in its work... plus my distaste for the shallow ~~intellectualities~~ (I can't type properly any more) intellectualities exchanged in the mistaken belief that this constituted wit (largely on the part of St. Joseph, who imagines himself another Oscar Wilde (one of the world's most famous homos - and who alluded to him at every opportunity and showed me an original letter of his, framed, on the wall.) This is great subject matter for a letter, isn't it? I don't mind a good dirty story if it is not indicative that the mind of the teller runs that way as a fixed condition...but these double entendres, etc. which seemed to be so boisterously amusing to the others, left me cold.

The  
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-2-

I think Mrs. St. Joseph, who seems to be quite a nice sort, is quite in awe of her son... doesn't understand him...and once said to him, after one of his cracks: "Ellis, sometimes I don't understand how I could have been your mother!" He took that as a compliment!

I was glad you weren't there to suffer with me as this is the side of Hollywood, however brilliant, that I want nothing of. As it was, by great exertion of will power, although I broke out in perspiration - it really being warm, plus my internal feelings - I held out till Howard got up to go home...and then held on during what seemed an interminable car ride home...and just got to the lavatory in my apartment before the flood. I was sick all night, and woke up with a hangover head-ache but thought if I ate breakfast it would help. It didn't!... Up it came...and had to put everything aside and lie down...and get calm inside...and then was up at eleven all right, though a bit shaky. It's not worth it - and to hell with it! I want to be sociable...and I should meet certain people...but not at ~~xxxxx~~ such a cost...and I refuse to KILL evenings with people as vacuous.

Incidentally, Anne Froelich strikes me as a nice girl. She is strangely a much better looking Lucy May type - blonde, blue eyes...better poised and balanced. Apparently Howard is seeking in her what he missed in Lucy... and poor Lucy, due to physical and other causes, has just lost out. You know there's a funny strain in that VanTyle family anyway...not that I'm completely on Howard's side by any means...but we've had a few observations of our own both ways...and I don't think either one or another is ever ~~always~~ all to blame for a crack-up.

In my talk with Loose he said to let our furniture go, except possibly a few choice pieces... to send bedding, dishes, books, etc. etc. through... to rent a furnished apartment out here, perhaps the one "we" are in, until we have looked around thoroughly... then possibly find what appears to be the place we want, and rent it furnished...or rent and furnish it...with an OPTION to buy...and if we find we like the neighborhood, then take it over...putting our money in improvements... and letting the original owners, ~~have~~ put their money into grading, landscaping, etc. which is an extra cost running into some thousands. He says many rich people have sunk small fortunes into homes and have had to give them up for a song and it is foolish for us to start new, encountering

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Hollywood, California

-3-

such headaches in these times.

You might sound out Mr. Bingham that it is just possible we may be moving west reasonably soon and would be interested in taking over your apartment... say the first of July...and buying such furniture as you wished to sell...and for how much? You can then have your furniture priced and see whether his figure, if he is interested, comes anywhere near what it would cost to have furniture moved out and sold. Even if we apparently took a loss, we would gain on the cost it would require to ship out here. I personally have no fondness for things. my whole love is wrapped up in you and the girls...and with you I could live out of a cracker barrel. (Especially if it had crackers in it!)

Loose thinks it would be all right for me to fly east and pick up a car and drive it to Marion and meet you folks there...and come on out by car. He says the trip would be wonderful and what I would save in picking car up at Detroit or South Bend or wherever the home plant is, would pay my plane fare...and what we would save coming out as a family, would go possibly a fourth or a third toward the price of the car. It all depends upon my time allowance here. We have dreamed of this trip together and I think we certainly deserve some kind of a vacation with the family. (Isn't it too bad we've had to speculate so much on what we could and could not do - and yet there has been no other way as yet...but, as Elsie, the astrological mystic, has said: "Things will get better and better as they approach my birthday!"

Tell Sidney I got his "load of dirt" on the eastern situation "from Hell Gate to the Golden Gate", as he so touchingly put it, and will be answering him by telepathy, since it's cheaper, and if he can't get my message, to use his imagination, which will probably give him more information than I would be sending him anyway. (I'll write him soon)

I'm glad you are not getting obligated with people who mean well, since I have a feeling that your time is getting short in the east...and you can then leave with a fairly free mind. (Regarding our rental there, have not brought it up and if I am treated handsomely, may not. Bingham may step into the situation anyway...or something happen there. I don't want to appear small, though they did promise to take care of it.)

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Hollywood, California

-4-

Back to the car matter. There are as many advices as there are car owners...Studebaker is good, say a number. Chrysler, also, say an equal number. Division of opinion on fluid drive...many say it is the most wonderful advance in car manufacture of recent years - and makes driving so simple that any child can operate a car...particularly easy for women who don't have to use clutch or shift gears...This is an item to consider with you and Mary as drivers, since there is much starting and stopping in heavy traffic here, necessitating many changes of gear...a nuisance. Anything that makes driving a pleasure for you and takes the pressure or strain off should be weighed carefully. I think I'll go down and look over the Chrysler job and possibly have them take me on a mountain climb to see what the car with fluid drive does on a hill. You saw Charlie's car and remember how we liked it...it's roominess also.

Well, it shouldn't be so many more days before we can make definite plans. It can't come too quickly for me...and hope, after this, that I don't have to pioneer the way. I don't have any inner misgivings or lack of confidence or feelings of loneliness in that demoralizing sense that apparently many people do, who are called upon to make like moves - but I MISS you and the girls...you can be sure of that!

All my love is waiting for you!

Harold

P. S. Thanks for sending on your father's letter. I'm going to write him as soon as the deal is closed! What was Edwin, Helen's brother like? Had letters gone home by then?

COPY

41 ~~41~~ -188  
WARNER BROS. PICTURES, INC.  
Burbank, Calif.

Office of Vice President

June 11, 1941

Mr. Jesse Lasky,  
Studio,  
Burbank, Calif.

Dear Jesse:

I have gone over the complete MARK TWAIN setup with Mr. Sears and at present we are definitely not in a position to go through with the deal.

I have done everything that my good business judgment will permit but truthfully and honestly I am afraid of anything pertaining to this proposition at this time. Hope that you can make a deal somewhere else with it, and I know that SERGEANT YORK will certainly be everything that the doctor ordered.

Want to take this opportunity of thanking you again for bringing the SERGEANT YORK deal to us, and also thank you for your excellent work in making the picture a finished production. I know it is one that we all can be proud of.

With every good wish,

Sincerely,

(Signed) JACK

41-196

June 13, 1941.

Dear Mother:

I have not written earlier because I have expected every day to be able to give you some definite news ...but now, at last, it has to be another minor disappointment...or, I should say - temporary...since Warner Brothers, after assuring Lasky that they would make a deal with him, have finally decided not to go ahead with "Twain"

As a consequence, Lasky is flying to New York, this next Tuesday night, with me - to see some financial people there who are interested in establishing him in his own producing company. Should this materialize, it would prove even more favorable for me, from the standpoint of salary and all other arrangements - so maybe this further delay is a blessing in disguise. At any rate, we have to face it and make the best of it.

My salary will also be cut to \$100 a week during this time as Lasky has borne all expenses out of his own pocket and says he can't do so until deal is set...or any better than the above mentioned sum.

At least this pays me something during the few weeks ahead - and he guarantees, when the deal is closed, to reimburse me for the difference between 1 and 5. (For your confidential information)

The expense of coming out here and living in two places at once has not left much over and I will need to have the deal go through to give me the lee way we need to move on.

I am going to plan and work toward the family's locating out here as soon as it can be arranged...as I think you'll agree, when you see California, this is WHERE we should be. You'll love it here.

Lasky estimates a three weeks' delay, during which time I remain in New York - and when the deal is set - buy a car and tour through with the family as we have dreamed of doing. Incidentally, I have gotten my driver's license out here, which will be good anywhere.



Now about your own plans. This throws our possible action into July, the hot time of year. I think we will be able to drive through to Traverse enroute west, with things taking the turn they have, when Lasky is ready for me again...so we could see you up there.

To avoid the hot weather, don't you think it would be advisable for you to go up to Traverse when Lillian comes home? We would try to stop and see Aunt Flora either going to Traverse or coming back from Traverse enroute west...can't make definite plans until really set.

But this indefinite wait, on your part, with things the way they are isn't pleasant or sensible. When I get back to New York I think I can send you some money to make the Traverse trip and have on hand...and we'll still hold faith that everything is going to work out profitably on this deal.

You can address a letter to me in New York which I will get next Wednesday - telling of your own plans...and I'll co-operate with you from my end.

Love to Aunt Flora and yourself...I'm terribly sorry that we've had to postpone things for so long...it's been rather tough all around.

41-194

June 14, 1941.

Friend Lark:

Well, the battle still goes on! It has been a long pull but I firmly believe it is going to end happily and profitably for all concerned.

I think your diplomatic and considerate handling of Lasky who has really been making sincere and strenuous efforts to put over a production of "Mark Twain" in the way we would all desire it - has held this deal together. Your understanding co-operation on all fronts has been much appreciated.

Lasky may be coming to New York with the desire still to take advantage of the George Ade "Twain party" on June 21st, taking you with him, with expenses paid, to have news reel pictures made, etc. etc. announcing the fact that he is going to produce the life story. If he is insistent, I suggest you accede to this and go with him...I'll tell you why.

Lasky has been compiling a scrap book of newspaper clippings on "Twain", all current material, just to get an idea how many times he is mentioned in the press every day in America. It is AMAZING. Then, he has been tremendously impressed by the Gallup poll, a copy of which survey I am bringing with me for you to see.

It is Lasky's opinion that the public reaction to the knowledge that a picture was going to be done on Twain would be electrifying and productive of such interest that the publicity alone would cement any deal... and he would give his assurance that he would stay at it until he HAS PUT IT OVER.

I know, for a fact, that Warners have offered Lasky a good job, making three program pictures a year but Lasky rightly says it would be the "end" for him as a big producer...he would just be another producer of "run of the mine" pictures on the Warner lot, if he accepted...He is making the fight to do Twain and also "Yankee" and other Twain stories...and intends to talk to the financial people interested on this basis.

The William Morris office out here said to me that Lasky was one of the greatest shooters and finest men in the business...and while he has admittedly

been short on funds, I am convinced he has done the best he could under the circumstances...and will treat us even better when he has resources at his disposal.

He told me he believed "Twain" could be done for a million. I think you will have to approach this change in the contract with great tact...as when a man thinks a basic contract is all set, it is sometimes disturbing to have a change requested. But YOU might ask him what he now figures Twain can be produced for...IF he says around a MILLION, you might then REMIND him that an allowance had been made for a TWO MILLION expense budget...but IF it is only going to require a MILLION, you want the contract changed so that we get, on the contract, 10% of the gross ABOVE the first million taken in. Otherwise, Lasky gets an extra \$100,000 before we participate.

I definitely FEEL that we must let him see we are happy to co-operate with him...He is most appreciative of your own help throughout...and, by preserving his GOOD WILL, we'll keep his enthusiasm at top pitch and get a finer result.

Mrs. Lasky took me aside and told me: "I'm glad you've been out here through this. You've helped Mr. Lasky enormously. I'm sure it's jealousy on the part of Hack Warner and Hal Wallis, production head of Warners...they don't want Lasky to get the acclaim which will come to him by producing Twain for Warners. But Mr. Lasky has produced his own pictures before - and the time has come for him to do it again...He's very loyal to those he believes in...and when this goes through - you see - he'll have you writing on all his projects...!"

I presume, arriving at noon Wednesday, 12:59 daylight saving time, we will not be at your office much before three in the afternoon.

IF you think it necessary, you might have Lasky dictate a letter, confirming his agreement to pay me \$100.00 a week till the deal is closed - and then to reimburse me, with closing of the deal, for whatever I have not received between the \$100.00 a week and the \$500.00 salary I should have been getting. I am to get paid then, in a lump sum - \$400 multiplied by the number of weeks it has required before closing of deal...and I am to get a higher salary when deal is set as well. I'll leave this all to you - it is working out fine without an agent as you felt it would.

105 41-198  
The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

June 14, 1941.

Dearest:

It goes without saying it was grand to hear your voice again last night.

I have a nice note from Loose this a.m. following my phone conversation with him yesterday. He says everything is working out for the best, that these developments are all for a purpose... I am sure he is right... and am not disturbed by the turn in plans at all. It was interesting to know of Coca Cola's interest and perhaps I am meant to return temporarily to close a deal there.

I have visualized constantly a period when we might enjoy a vacation and a car trip and I am confident this is going to work out, too. I just got my driver's license yesterday after having taken 7 lessons in driving from a professional instructor, George Stockford, brushing up on the latest gear shift methods. So this means I can buy a car in New York and get right in it and drive us away. This man is excellent - and I'd have you and Mary take lessons of him at once, on arrival here.

I am looking forward to my plane trip which will be via sleeper plane. Leaving here at 5:10 in the afternoon, Flight #4, as I told you, arriving 11:59 Eastern standard which is 12:59 daylight. Inasmuch as you are coming out to airport, you might as well come early and watch the planes. Perhaps we can have lunch there if I am not too rushed. I want you all to meet Lasky who is a real family type of man.

I am seeing Mrs. Lasky for a little while this afternoon, then going down into Los Angeles to the Jonathan Club to see Charlie. He was quite disappointed in this further delay, but I am NOT. I want to come back rather quietly and not get involved while in New York. We're in the transition stage and need to keep close to the REAL forces and conditions working through us.

It will be great to hold you in my arms again. You are my only Sweetheart... and the only one I ever want.

Love to the girls... and tell them everything is working out fine.

P.S. Haven't received letter yet on Coca Cola but tell H.C. can see them after Wednesday.

Harold

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

107  
41-204  
June 15, 1941.

Dearest:

I had a feeling there was a special on the way and stayed in this morning so I would be here when it arrived - which it did at 11:30 my time or 3:30 yours. I thought strongly of Arthur and was on the verge of writing him, then thought I would be in New York so soon, that I'd wait...but I understand now, since you are probably at Arthur's this present minute.

Every phase of your planning has worked out wonderfully EXCEPT the closing of this deal which would permit us to make the westward move. What a break it would be if Lasky can settle on this new development before the week is out and we could notify Bingham! With the deal arranged, even though the money hadn't changed hands yet, I would be disposed to borrow \$2,500.00, if it were possible and getting out of New York before July 1st, making a payment down on a car and taking our "vacation trip" through the country, arriving out here in time to go to work, three or four weeks later. I am determined to make this change...perhaps the Coca Cola interest will be a contributing factor. At any rate, see if you can hold the interest along the lines you have developed, until I get on the scene. It would seem that the forces are paving the way for us...and the other necessary things MUST happen in time for us to take advantage of it!

My bags and carton containing clothes are on the way to New York, having left Saturday. I insured the tennis bag for \$50.00, the Gladstone and contents for \$100.00 and the carton with clothes for \$750.00. I was a bit dubious about it's holding up for return trip to New York (sent it in Weber & Heilbroner container) and tied it best I could - but, you know me, I'm no packer! We'll have to check things carefully when they arrive to be sure they are not damaged. My typewriter leaves tomorrow.

Charlie Whitmore has been hanging on out here hoping my deal would go through and he took this further delay pretty hard...said he was practically broke and his brother was kicking on sending more money, had not been sympathetic toward his coming to California anyway, etc. I let him have \$25.00 last night and, of course, paid \$31.60 on his note at Bank Avenue Bank. Charlie has decided to stay out here several more weeks in hope things finally do happen.

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1748 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

-2-

I am strangely not disturbed basically in the least and feel this is all for the best...but I am consciously eager for things to happen so that we can make the move most advantageous to us along the lines you have worked out. SOMEHOW this MUST be done.

My bank balance here is \$285.13 and I owe the Canterbury some \$60.00 which I will have to pay... and have not paid anything on Weber & Heilbroner bill or Rialto, although have paid tennis bill. I am going to try to get Lasky to advance me \$100.00 which he will ~~own~~ me on Wednesday, as of new temporary arrangement... and think I will send Weber & Heilbroner a check on account from here...and, so far as they will know, I am not back in New York for time being.

I would like to hold my checking account in California bank and arrange to leave about \$25.00 in this account while I am in east, so we can go back to it when the move does occur.

Isn't it hell that this battle has to be dragged out to the last bitter end? What a story we could write - in our own blood!

As you can see, we will have to watch our finances pretty close again until the break comes. I can't pay anything to Lark under this new arrangement until I am reimbursed for balance. Of course all this information is private between us.

Elizabeth Arden, did I tell you, who is worth some millions, when she learned Lasky had an offer from a financial syndicate to set up his own company, went to Bessie Lasky and said she'd be interested in financing her husband. They had a conference yesterday and she is seeing him again on Monday. This is a funny world! Is this the woman Elsie has seen in the background?

Harry Losee in a note to me, says: "Mark Twain will be produced. You may be sure of this. Accept the present delay without fear or worry and know the eventual will be to your satisfaction - so please do not waste nervous strength and emotion over the present..." (I am seeing him tomorrow)

The  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 NORTH CHEROKEE AVE.  
Hollywood, California

-3-

I appreciated the Father's Day letters from the girls. I haven't been much of a father in many ways...nor have I been able to do for my family what many fathers have done...As I look back over the past twenty years, it seems there has been no real time when I could relax and draw a really deep breath with the knowledge that my dear ones were cared for... and this has kept my mind and energies so upon my responsibilities...that to take time off and play and enjoy the girls in that way hasn't seemed possible.

I think you can understand this inner feeling. It's been terrific. The few hours I have been able to get free, I have needed for my own physical and mental salvation and have taken on the tennis court or in getting off by myself, if only in my room. It's the only way I've been able to stand the pressure. But the element of playing for play's sake has seemed to me unwarranted in the face of economic conditions prevailing...One needs a free inner mind to do that...and always there has been beating into me the necessity for getting certain experience, for getting certain creative jobs behind me...to SPEED the day when REAL SUCCESS might be mine...and all these other things, from which I have been so long deprived, would be added. The only tough part of it is - you can't get back the years you have lived, with the children growing up...but, perhaps there have been compensations, too...The girls have grown up, independent entities, self-reliant, talented and well-mannered and beautiful...thanks far more to you than to me. I don't often say it - but I'm proud of my two daughters as I am eternally proud of my wife. It's a privilege to have been a father to them...and to have had you for their mother....

This last little delay certainly must be the final test. But let's not doubt for the moment but that our dreams are coming true and SOON.

If possible, perhaps we can have lunch at the airport. And if I can get Lasky to eat with us, think this would be a good time for you all to meet him. I think you will agree he is a fine person...he will be so rushed in New York that this might be only time you could see him... and if our home is a bit torn up, we wouldn't very well entertain him there.

Well, it won't be long now until we'll all be together again - but at the wrong end of the country! However, we'll rectify that before long, too! Love to all - Harold

P.S. Your plans for disposing of furniture are all fine - IF and W46N--!

41-213

June 30, 1941.

Dear Charlie:

Thanks for your swell letter. My note to you crossed in the mail. Since that time, as I surmised, Lasky has been kept so busy on the Sergeant York opening that he has been unable to think of Twain. The Warners sent one of their Jewish publicity men down to Tennessee to pick up York and when he got through telling York how he was going to be wined and dined at the premiere, York refused to come. This meant that Lasky had to hop a plane to Tennessee and straighten the mess out.

The opening is a dress affair and Martha and I are going with the Wandermans...dressing for the first time in several years. We are pulling for York to be a smash hit and I feel, for patriotic reasons alone, the critics have got to praise it.

In tonight's paper I read that Lasky is trying to buy the movie rights to "Life With Father" which I regard as the greatest American comedy ever written. If he is successful, and can tie up Twain and Connecticut Yankee too, I can't think of three greater pieces of property available for movies. And this would put Lasky on THE TOP to stay for the rest of his life.

I appreciate your enthusiasm out there on the coast and ask you to bear with me in patience and endurance for I am sure nothing can be done this week, with the Fourth following right after the Wednesday opening. I am hopeful Lasky can get things closed this next week, however, which is my birthday week - the 13th. An astrologer told me that nothing could stop me AFTER this birthday...and it won't be long before we'll know whether she's right!

I suggest you go slow in trying to quiz Bruington because I don't want him to get the idea you are trying to pump him for me. He's a nice fellow but during this unsettled period, we've got to be mighty careful not to make a wrong move.

I'd have written sooner but each day have expected some developments until Lasky called yesterday and said he would have to wait until after the opening as he couldn't get his mind on anything else, the Warners making demands on him night and day. He is really a swell person and I feel this delay will work to my advantage in the long run. But how HARD it is to wait - and wait!

Everyone at the Club was delighted to get your greetings and my description of how you were looking and how situated. I talked to Nat Falzer also, who was pleased, and said he hadn't heard from you for some time.

I was only plane sick the last ten minutes - so enjoyed trip immensely...and wouldn't have been sick then but



had developed slight headache from snapping and cracking of ear drums in two mile high flying during night...and we hit bumpy weather, flying through edge of a thunder storm coming into LaGuardia field which was all that was needed to upset the stomach. Martha and the girls met me...and I was soon over my uncomfortable feelings. The weather had been clear ALL the way across the country...and SMOOTH FLYING...you could really sleep in the plane...It's a marvelous way to travel.

I could see you and Mrs. McNamara and Bruington against the fence and, when you all waved, thought of course you could see me, too. It was grand of you to see me off...and it gave me a pang to go and leave you - who have been such an ally of mine. It is my constant prayer that everything is going to work out in a most happy and satisfactory manner.

Coca Cola is really much interested in the possibility of putting me on the air and I am waiting now for the President of the company to come up from Atlanta to see me, probably next week. I had lunch with the treasurer of McCann-Erickson Agency today...and they are interested in possible purchase of radio rights to life of Mark Twain for one of their clients...so maybe other things will develop while I am here.

Tomorrow I lunch with Quincy Howe of Simon & Schuster and discuss the changes on the Wilkins book he wants.

Charlie, only you and Martha really know the battle I have made to justify the faith a few dear friends have had in me these years. I have never let up trying and working, night and day...and this effort must be rewarded SOON. I feel I am near the real and great turning point of my life...so hold everything in this faith...and be sure that I will get word to you at once when anything definite has happened.

Please give my best to Mrs. McNamara. I'll drop you a line to let you know how the premiere went off after Wednesday. Meanwhile, keep as well as you can and as assured that we are going to have something to celebrate about...before long!

Everyone here sends their love...lots of it...with the hope that we'll be having a reunion on the coast in several weeks! Martha has everything ready for a quick move at this end. It's GO TO COME!

July 5, 1941.

48

41-217

Friend Harry:

The news of Ma Loose's improvement was cheering and we prayerfully hope it continues.

Something good, in another way, has happened here. "Sergeant York", Lasky's picture, was a big success at the opening, which we attended. This means that Lasky should have no trouble raising the capital he is seeking and, in a talk with him yesterday, he indicated that he would be ready to close the deal next week. When and if he does - we will plan to leave here as a family as quickly as we can - buying a car and stopping off at Marion, Indiana to visit Mother and her widowed sister, our Aunt Flora Baldwin. Then, time permitting, we will drive on up to Traverse for a short visit with Martha's people...and on out west from there.

Yes, I brought your play, "Thieves" with me. It has some good things in it but is old-fashioned as plays go today and would need considerable revising before it should be submitted anywhere. I will talk to you about it when we meet again.

I deeply appreciate the permission to present some of this knowledge to a group of intimate friends, which group is to assemble at our home next Thursday evening...and we wish you might be able to visit us at that time...8 o'clock our time, even though we might not be aware of your presence. I will proceed carefully and it will be interesting to me to use this as a test to determine what the reaction may be when the Book of Urantia is published, with the much fuller story.

I am glad to know that what happened to me during sleep was an authentic experience, even though I was not able to co-operate fully as yet. Perhaps when I understand more completely what takes place during sleep, it will help. I am relieved to know that the "little people" was not an hallucination and that this is also significant.

I hope that the real turn in my affairs is near at hand and that next week will see everything all set, with the Twain matter and the Coca Cola matter reaching a climax. My birthday is approaching on horseback, July 13th, and some of my ismic friends insist that after its arrival, great things are in store for me - much money and an unlimited opportunity for spiritual service.

Our love to you and Ma Loose...and best wishes always.

41-218

380 Riverside Drive,  
New York City, N.Y.

July 10, 1941.

Mr. Charles T. Lark,  
Mark Twain Company,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Lark:

This will confirm our understanding that the Mark Twain Company participation in the final contract which has just been concluded with Lasky shall be the same as that agreed on with reference to the Lasky option contract of some months ago.

Sincerely,

41-219

July 11, 1941.

Dear Charlie:

Well, at last, I am able to send you  
GOOD NEWS!

The contract was signed yesterday  
and the first money passed. Lasky has gone back  
to Hollywood, with Mr. Bruington who flew on  
here to help conclude the deal (and who, incidentally,  
thinks you're swell!)

I am to be notified by Lasky how soon  
he wants me on the coast since he must go into  
a conference with Warners immediately on arrival  
and complete production plans. But Lasky thinks  
it will be soon.

Meanwhile we are making plans to leave  
here even ahead of notification by him (although  
he has said he would wire me definite instructions  
the first of next week).

We are getting a car and driving through,  
probably stopping off in Marion, Indiana and Traverse  
City, Michigan enroute. I have never had what even  
resembled a vacation for 15 years and will appreciate  
a week or two's drawing of a deep breath before the  
work begins again - as much as I am going to enjoy it.

I do not know what my salary is going to  
be when I am re-hired...but am certain it will not  
be less than five a week. I am not on salary now and  
have not been reimbursed, as yet, for the weeks I  
have worked, up to the present at "one" per week.

You see, Lasky borrowed sufficient money  
to make a payment down on the purchase of the picture  
rights and still has to complete financial arrangements  
on the coast - which changed the whole set-up as  
originally planned when we were to receive \$25,000  
as first amount.

I have next to nothing in the bank now  
and it will be a week or so before the check can  
be cleared which will give me enough to make the  
western trip on. I am disappointed in the initial  
amount which was only "ten", giving me a net of  
"three" - the balance of the "forty" to be spread  
over next year.

I must purchase a car and am getting a Buick which many friends tell me is the best value on the market today. The close to \$400 that it would cost to pay fares for the family and myself to California can thus go into the car. But, even so, this will run my expense to around \$1300.00 on this item alone. If I had not been in such straightened circumstances for years I would not now find myself up against the necessity of outfitting family and self, not elaborately, but as to clothes and a few things, like the car, which are absolute essentials in Hollywood. I considered a less expensive car but was told that a trip across country would be too much of a wear and tear on it and that a Buick would give me more value for the money and stand up better in every way.

There is no guarantee, as yet, as to how soon I will be back on salary...but we can sell some of our furniture now and possibly get the apartment off our hands - when to wait longer would lose these chances...so we have decided to get on the move west even before everything is set on my services (unless the good word comes next week!)

As sacred as my obligations are to you, there are matters here which must be cleaned up before I leave for good...and I am going to have to husband my resources carefully until I am back on salary when we can work out a schedule that will relieve your mind and needs completely, I am sure.

Meanwhile, I am sending you this check for fifty dollars with the hope that it helps you temporarily. I ask your patience a short while longer while I emerge from the difficult situation I have been in and get myself on partly an even keel. Had the deal gone through on its original basis, you can realize that I could have done something substantial immediately. But you have the assurance now that before long we can get on a basis which will see you reimbursed entirely in a few months' time. I think Howard will appreciate that I must have enough to protect my own family and immediate needs in this move - but he now has the definite knowledge that I am on the way out of my economic wilderness and there is a green light ahead.

If you should have any occasion to talk to Bruington I suggest that you do not indicate too intimate a knowledge of this deal. I will show you the contracts when I see you. I'll keep you advised. LOVE

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

41-222

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

July 17th, 1941

Dear Harold:

I realize you have been anxiously awaiting word from me. I should have written you sooner but my return to the studio was like Lindbergh's arrival at Le Bourget Field, or Sergeant York's reception at the pier when he returned from the World War.

I am just emerging from under an avalanche of telegrams and letters and hasten to get this message off to you.

I have practically completed the financial setup of a Lasky unit but am weighing carefully a proposition from Warner Bros. which would permit me the same latitude in producing "Mark Twain" that I had in producing "Sergeant York", with less responsibility and involvement in corporate matters which I might be happy to spare myself. My one concern is to complete a deal rapidly so that work can go ahead on the picture. We are pledged to come to a decision next week as I am flying with Mr. Warner to Chicago on Sunday, July 27th. As soon as matters are really settled, I will notify you by wire and then you can make your arrangements to start west.

I read on the train the first part of your treatment and I think it is generally in the right direction. It would be nice if you completed it in your spare time, as I think you suggested to Mr. Bruington, although this is optional with you as I cannot personally lay out any more money until the deal is completed at which time your salary will come from the Lasky Company or Warner Bros.

By the way, the first announcements of the fact that I am to do the life of Mark Twain have brought me a deluge of suggestions from writers, including two treatments written by foolish people who went ahead without attempting to secure the rights. I have not read them as yet but will save them for you to read.

Pete Bruington, Randy and Julius Evans join me in sending you warm regards, and Mrs. Lasky and I look forward to entertaining you and Mrs. Sherman.

Sincerely yours,

VITAPHONE

*Jesse L. Lasky*

PS - I hope Mr. Lark saw SERGEANT YORK; I arranged for his tickets. Young Mr. Lark wrote me a charming letter after he saw the picture last Saturday night.

41-223

July 20, 1941.

Dear Charlie:

Thank you for your fine letter and your advice - all of which was in order.

I am sitting amidst boxes and remnants of furniture - odds and ends, with our having sold most of it and subleasing our apartment.

This has saved us close to seven hundred dollars - but we had to make this move now in order to rent the apartment and get rid of the furniture as the parties would have gone elsewhere.

I would prefer to be leaving New York with a definite contract for my writing services but a special airmail from Lasky yesterday states that he expects his deal to be set next week and he will then wire me to complete arrangements and come on to California - so he is definitely counting me in on the writing job, as he promised before he left here...and furthermore stated that my latest treatment (the one you liked) is in the right general direction - and that he wishes me to continue along that line.

I wired Lasky telling him that my mother was ill in the middle west (she has had a bad heart for a number of years) and that I wished to visit her if there was time and that I could be in Hollywood by around August 15th. I have not heard from this wire, although the contents of his letter received after the wire was sent, would indicate that this time schedule I have suggested will closely coincide with his own.

I do not think it advisable for Lasky to know, as yet, that I am already out of my apartment and will be actually enroute west when he next hears from me - after I have received definite instructions from him. Please keep this in mind should you be talking to Bruington for any reason. Let Bruington tell you of my movements with respect to the deal, if he is so minded. (Even though you may know of them through me first)

I am sure everything is going to work out fine. Unless you get further word from me I can be reached at 614 West 12th Street, Marion, Indiana this next week-end and at 222 Washington St., Traverse City, Mich from then until August 5th or so. Love and best to you!

44-224

**SCREEN WRITERS' GUILD INC.**  
*(Affiliated with the Author's League of America, Inc.)*

Membership Card  
ACTIVE

HAROLD M. SHERMAN Member

Issued Sept. 4, 1941 ~~xxx~~

WARNER BROS. PICTURES, INC.  
Burbank, California 2356  
IDENTIFICATION CARD

Name HAROLD M. SHERMAN

Dept. WRITER

Date Issued 1941 AUGUST 21st.

Signed Olaf M. Matthews



41-232

July 20, 1941.

Mr. Walter M. Germain,  
Crime Prevention Division,  
Saginaw, Michigan.

Dear Mr. Germain:

Your letters have followed me to the coast and back again.

I made a rush trip out there for Jesse L. Lasky who recently premiered his latest movie hit, "Sergeant York" at the Astor Theatre here in New York.

Lasky's next picture is to be the life of MARK TWAIN and I am to do the screen play.

I am moving to Hollywood with wife and family, consisting of two daughters, but am visiting first in Marion, Indiana and then in Traverse City, Michigan, my original home town. (Although Marion claims me as a home town boy since I received my newspaper and advertising and early dramatic writing training there)

We leave Tuesday of this week and will be in Hollywood at the Canterbury Apartments, 1746 N. Cherokee Avenue, after August 15th.

I have appreciated your keeping me in touch with your activities and research in matters of the mind. I am having to do some revising on the Wilkins book and this, in turn, is having to wait on the Twain job.

Please accept my congratulations for your perseverance in this field of investigation which so needs to be opened up and its practical usability demonstrated to all thinking humans. (Still, unfortunately, in the minority!)

Best to you always! Sincerely -

41-234



THE CITY CLUB OF NEW YORK

July 21, 1941.

Dear Mr. Lasky:

Your fine letter to me and my wire to you crossed in transit.

My mother, residing in Marion, Indiana, is seriously ill with heart trouble and I am leaving for Marion with my family to visit her tomorrow. I can be reached at 614 West 12th St., Marion, Indiana until further notice.

Meanwhile I have definite interest in MARK TWAIN for radio through John L. Anderson of McCann-Erickson. I have developed this contact myself and it is not one that I can diplomatically turn over to Music Corp., but Mr. Anderson wants an outline of the presentation idea and our cost of the show packaged to them for production in Hollywood - with stars to be used in picture, show to get under way in October.



THE CITY CLUB OF NEW YORK

-2-

I know exactly how this show should be done and we will make more money producing it ourselves than letting the agency do it. I want it to be a "Jesse L. Lasky" presents - with tie-ins later on important developments with regard to the making of the Mark Twain picture.

Will you please do some figuring on production costs, what you want to add in the way of cost for your own services and the profit you feel the show should make, on a budgeted basis, in which the Mark Twain Estate and I are to participate on the 40% agreed upon split. I forget the legal phrasing of this arrangement but you will know what I mean - we are to receive 40% of what you get for your share on entire production.

I should receive \$500.00 a week

41-235



THE CITY CLUB OF NEW YORK

-3-

for doing the script of each half hour show.

If you close your picture arrangements this week, as anticipated, would you like me to meet you in Chicago this Sunday or Monday - and conclude my agreement with you....and also get the information I need on the radio end in order to prepare a presentation and submit it to McO ann Erickson?

At any rate, I would appreciate word from you at the Marion address - and will be ready to come on out to Hollywood when wanted.

I know we are going to do great things with Twain on screen and radio. My best to you and all!

41-236

**CLASS OF SERVICE**  
 This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

# WESTERN UNION (50)

1201

SYMBOLS
DL = Day Letter
NT = Overnight Telegram
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PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. G. WILLEVER  
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

ND152 TWS PD 3=NEWYORK NY 21 244P

HAROLD M SHERMAN=

:380 RIVERSIDE DRIVE=

1941 JUL 21 PM 2 51

=MY NEGOTIATIONS WILL NOT BE CONCLUDED UNTIL NEXT WEEK  
 CONSEQUENTLY IT SEEMS ALL RIGHT FOR YOU TO MAKE TRIP WEST  
 AS OUTLINED. YOUR WIRE ADVISE ME YOUR ADDRESS IN MIDDLE WEST  
 AND WILL KEEP YOU POSTED. REGARDS=

=JESSE L LASKY WARNER BROS STUDIOS BURBANK CAL.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

Sunday

ask S. Berman

41-237

New York City: 173 W. 81<sup>st</sup> St.: July 27-1941

My dear Jessie Lasky:

I'm just back from Vermont and find my typist is estimating <sup>in</sup> Maine, and it's Sunday! But my friend and attorney, Abraham L. Berman, relayed a suggestion from Mr. Jake Wilk, of Warner Bros.; that I write you.

I knew Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) privately enough for me to absorb his temperament, manner, sense of humor, drawl, art of pausing and his emotional transports. He had a strong voice but no stronger than mine. Austin Strong, William Starbuck Briggs, (Gen'l Mgr. of Harper Bros.), Prof. William Lyons Phelps, and Mrs. Ida Benby Judd (President of the Mark Twain Association of New York) can, with many others, attest the truth of the foregoing. They saw me impersonate Mark at the centenary celebration in his honor at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, in November 1935. Harper Bros., Twain's publishers - sponsored the banquet and stage program. Only on the strength of my characterization was I enabled to get Harold Sherman on a contract to put a dramatization of the great humorist on paper always, of course, with the understanding that I would enact the title role on the stage. Sherman's contract provides that a stage presentation must precede any screen production.

Jessie Lasky  
Warner Bros.  
Burbank,  
Cal.

I am familiar with all of Twain's works  
yours with best wishes  
Howard Kyle

118  
41-238  
COPY

New York City, 173 W. 81st St., July 27 - 1941.

My dear Jesse Lasky:

I'm just back from Vermont and find my typist is estivating in Maine and it's Sunday! But my friend and attorney, Abraham L. Berman, relayed a suggestion from Mr. Jake Wilk, of Warner Brothers, that I write you.

I knew Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) privately - enough for me to absorb his temperament, manner, sense of humor, drawl, art of pausing and his emotional transports. He had a strong voice but no stronger than mine.

Austin Strong, William Harlowe Briggs (General Manager of Harper Brothers) Prof. William Lyon Phelps, and Mrs. Ida Benfy Judd, President of the Mark Twain Association of New York, can, with many others, attest the truth of the foregoing.

They saw me impersonate Mark at the Centenary Celebration in his honor at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, in November 1935. Harper Brothers, Mark Twain's publishers, sponsored the banquet and program. Only on the strength of my characterization was I enabled to get Harold Sherman on a contract to put a dramatization of the great humorist on paper, always, of course, with the understanding that I would act the title role on the stage.

Sherman's contract provides that a stage presentation must precede any screen production.

I am familiar with all of Twain's works.

Yours with best wishes,

Howard Kyle (signed)

41-243

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this  
21st day of August, 1941, by and

BETWEEN

WARNER BROS. PICTURES, INC.,  
a Delaware corporation,  
hereinafter referred to as  
the "Producer,"

AND

HAROLD SHERMAN,  
hereinafter referred to as  
the "Author,"

W I T N E S S E T H:

For and in consideration of the mutual covenants  
and agreements hereinafter contained and set forth, the parties  
hereto have agreed and do hereby agree as follows, to wit:

1. The Producer hereby employs and engages the  
Author to render his exclusive services for and during the  
period of this agreement in and about its business of producing  
motion pictures with and/or without talking sequences or other  
sound reproducing accompaniment or synchronization, as a writer  
of dialogue, original stories, scenarios, adaptations and con-  
tinuities, and, at the option of Producer, to assist in the  
cutting, titling and editing of pictures, and to perform all  
other duties pertaining to the work of a writer, upon the  
express condition that all the duties, obligations and agree-  
ments assumed or entered into by the Author hereunder shall be  
fully performed and kept by him.

2. The Author hereby accepts such employment  
and agrees that he will, during the continuance hereof, con-  
scientiously perform the services required of him hereunder



ASSIGNMENT and AGREEMENT.

1. Subject to the several terms, conditions and agreements hereinafter set forth,

WE, the undersigned, for and in consideration of the sum of Ten (\$10.00) Dollars and other good and valuable considerations to us severally in hand paid by JESSE L. LASKY, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, have given, granted, bargained, sold, assigned, transferred and set over, and do by these presents give, grant, bargain sell, assign, transfer and set over unto the said JESSE L. LASKY, hereinafter for convenience referred to as "Lasky", the motion picture, radio and television rights in and to the following properties:

- (a) MARK TWAIN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Published by Harper and Bros., copyrighted by Clara Gabrilowitsch, October 17, 1924, No. A: 807431.
- (b) MARK TWAIN'S SPEECHES:  
With an introduction by William Dean Howells, copyrighted by Harper and Bros., June 22, 1910, No. A: 265905. This copyright was renewed by Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch, December 7, 1937, No. B: 61165.  
With an introduction by Albert Bigelow Paine, published by Harper and Bros., copyrighted by the Mark Twain Co., May 23, 1923, No. A: 704931.
- (c) MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY: THE PERSONAL AND LITERARY LIFE OF SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLIMENS, By Albert Bigelow Paine, copyrighted by Harper and Bros., September 25, 1912, No. A: 319966. This copyright was renewed by Dora L. Paine, widow of Albert Bigelow Paine, October 31, 1939, No. B: 80291.
- (d) MARK TWAIN'S LETTERS: Arranged with comment by Albert Bigelow Paine, copyrighted by the Mark Twain Company, November 10, 1917, No. A: 477761.
- (e) MARK TWAIN'S NOTEBOOK: Prepared for publication by Albert Bigelow Paine, copyrighted by the Mark Twain Company, October 13, 1935, No. A: 86735.
- (f) MARK TWAIN IN ERUPTION: Edited by Bernard de Voto, copyrighted by the Mark Twain Company, November 26, 1940, No. A: 147993.
- (g) MARK TWAIN: An unpublished drama in three acts and 15 scenes by Harold M. Sherman, copyrighted by Harold M. Sherman September 5, 1936, No. D: 44554.

1942

Mark Twain Company and  
Mr. Harold M. Sherman  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York, N. Y.

Concurrently herewith you have executed an assignment to me of the motion picture, radio, television and certain other rights in certain literary material based upon, and/or relating to the life of Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain).

In consideration of your execution of said assignment, and for all the rights therein granted and/or agreed to be granted, I hereby agree to pay to you the following sums of money (in addition to all other sums heretofore paid you by me) at the times and under the conditions hereinafter set forth:

1. Ten thousand (\$10,000) dollars upon your acceptance of this agreement, receipt of which, by such acceptance you hereby acknowledge.

2. The additional sum of Fifteen thousand (\$15,000) dollars upon the commencement of principal photography of the First Photoplay produced under said assignment (provided that the use of the words "First Photoplay" in this letter agreement shall not be deemed to enlarge the rights conferred upon me by virtue of said assignment), but not later than July 1st, 1942.

3. The additional sum of Twenty-five thousand (\$25,000) dollars on the day following the date of the first general release in the United States of said First Photoplay, but not later than July 1st, 1943.

4. In addition thereto, I agree to pay or cause to be paid to you royalties on the following basis:

10% of the amount by which the producer's gross proceeds from the distribution of said picture shall exceed \$2,000,000.;

12½% of the amount by which the producer's gross proceeds from the distribution of said picture shall exceed \$3,000,000.;

15% of the amount by which such gross proceeds from the distribution of said picture shall exceed \$4,000,000.;

17½% of the amount by which such gross proceeds from the distribution of said picture shall exceed \$5,000,000.;

(117)

41-245

August 31, 1941.

Friend Lark:

For once in my life everything synchronized perfectly - and after an indescribably beautiful trip through the country, with stop-offs in Marion, Indiana where mother now resides part of the year, and in Traverse City, Michigan, where the balance of our relatives hide away - we finally landed out here on August 17th, and I was at work, under contract, three days later - at \$500.00 per week.

I was given a collaborator, Alan LeMay, by name, who had just finished 90 weeks with DeMille, having to his credit, among others, the screen play of "Northwest Mounted Police". He has had several years on the Mississippi, being thoroughly familiar with this atmosphere, which is a help - and I am glad to report that we are hitting it off splendidly together...having already prepared a story outline which Lasky has accepted and being well under way with the final treatment.

To show how producers do things, Lasky had hired LeMay to work out a treatment last May and June, while I was here, unbeknownst, to me - and had turned over my Chronological material, etc. to him, to help him. And LeMay failed - as everyone else has failed in all major studios - to develop a story outline from the vast amount of dramatizable incidents. When I got back here and saw his material and where he had missed, I joined it up with my material and hit upon a bridging and fusing of incidents which finished the job! I have learned that Darryl Zamuck, at 20th Century-Fox, employed ten different ace writers, at a cost of between \$30,000 and \$40,000 to make a story out of Twain's life from available published and research material, hoping to get something he could make an offer to the Estate on...and SCRAPPED it all. So it appears that our long, hard work on this material and our own collaboration and development has really been worth something! Lasky is highly pleased at the way things are going.

For your information, LeMay is getting \$850.00 a week, but I have been told it is unusual for Warners to be starting me at \$500.00...and that this is a high starting figure the way things are out here now, without a writer's having a string of picture credits. I am on a week to week basis so Lasky can "up" my salary when he feels he can show the front office my increased worth. Perhaps, after this final treatment is completed and we are starting on the shooting script in an economy of time, Lasky may go to bat for me...because we are going to save the studio thousands of dollars in salary at the rate we are traveling.

You will be amused to see that Howard Kyle has bobbed up again, through this copy of a letter sent to Lasky under date of July 27th and turned over to me for explanation. What do you suppose Kyle thinks or hopes he is going to accomplish by such letters? He apparently didn't know at this time that I was a part of Lasky's negotiations.

I had a wonderful time with George and Helen Lark last Sunday, when George drove my car with my wife and daughters and I in it, up to the top of Mount Wilson and back again...and we had Sunday supper in their cheery little home. George is a fine person; his wife is delightful, and his baby quite the cutest little girl I have seen in many a day.

George is coming over every Thursday to get from Mrs. Sherman the moneys due you.

Incidentally, I have not seen Clara yet but must do so soon. I do not have her home address nor her private telephone number...but will learn it from the Laskys the first of the week. I will not discuss any contract matters with her which, of course, is an Estate affair...and Lasky says he will keep her acquainted in a general way with developments... but it is important that she does not impede progress with well-intentioned suggestions since we are going along so swimmingly. Some poetic license has had to be taken in the story outline...but it is amazing how closely, in the main, we can follow Twain's real life, and his actual dialogues...I think you will be greatly pleased...as Clara should be...when the job is completed.

If you have not made the trip through Yellowstone, you should plan on it next summer, since July and August are the only two months you can safely and with comfort, go through. It is an absolute MUST for all who wish to commune with God through Nature. I could feel His presence there as never before. It would inspire you to write more poetry and more songs, "God in Nature" the theme...He speaks to us through mountains high, etc... I'm no poet but it may give you the idea...and perhaps you've already been through Yellowstone many times...

I'd like to express again my deep appreciation for your continued faith in me, and for the privilege of working with you on this Mark Twain material...which I can safely say now, is going to develop into a most valuable piece of property for the Mark Twain Estate, opening the door for numerous other works to be done, since Lasky is more and more enthused over possibilities.

Please let me hear from you and how you are feeling. I hope you have been making continued progress along the health road. My wife and daughters already love the west...and I am sure we are going to be most happy here...freed from the parasites and phonies you helped liberate me from in the East!

Best to you!

P.S. Note how Kyle states it was through his characterization of Twain at the Waldorf which got me my contract with the Twain Estate. That's pathetic and laughable...what possible connection could there be with his feeble characterization and my entirely separate play treatment, with which he had nothing to do!

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

41-265

~~123~~

September 18th, 1941.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
Canterbury Apartments,  
1746 N. Cherokee Ave.,  
Hollywood, California.

Dear Sherman:-

I intended writing you much sooner, but have been at home quite a little of late. Nevertheless, the doctor says I am making good progress.

I was glad to have your letter about the collaboration you are getting and also glad to learn that the good worker selected by Mr. Lasky was nitting it up with you in good shape.

Homer Croy came to see me some weeks ago and said that he had seen newspaper statements that Lasky was getting out a motion picture based on Mark Twain's life and said that he had written and wired him about helping him on this work. I promptly told me the matter was in your hands and that you are in Hollywood busy at work on the shooting script, etc.

I also learned that several weeks ago Lasky had had DeVoto come down to New York for a conference about the life of Mark Twain and he told De Voto that he might want him to come West to do some writing for him in connection with the picture. I have had several letters from DeVoto recently which said nothing about this subject matter and one came yesterday telling me that he was going to Iowa for several weeks to deliver a lot of lectures and that he was going to be terribly busy this fall. I, therefore, take it that he has no immediate trip to California in mind or else he would have included that in his prospective itinerary in the next few months.

I was really amused on reading copy of the letter which your half-brother Kyle - or is it "Guile", sent to Lasky. Of course, it was a slick trumped up lie as he wanted to disturb Lasky in trying to make him think that the stage production would have to be produced before the movie, and of course, I see he roped his lawyer in, etc., all of which was just as ridiculous as it was not true and of course, designed to disturb Mr. Lasky and try to put Kyle in as a factor in the situation. It was a cheap method to disturb both you and Mr. Lasky. By the way,

Mr. Harold M. Sherman - # 2

September 18, 1941.

give Mr. Lasky my best and also to Mr. Bruington.

I was awfully sorry to learn through George that you had a mishap to your knee in connection with too strenuous exercises on the concrete tennis courts. I decided a long time ago that that game was entirely too fast for me and put too much of a strain on one's heart especially if you put real pep into the game as I always did and I am sure you do. In other words, I think at your age, one ought to be careful instead of trying to keep up that old pace as you are really paying too much for the exercise.

With best regards and every good wish to you and yours,  
I am,

Yours faithfully,

*Charles T. Lark*  
(Charles T. Lark)

P. S. Charles, Jr. leaves Pocatello, Idaho today and will spend the week-end with George at 821 Salisbury Road, La Canada, California. By the way, I guess you know his telephone address has been changed and is now not listed. His new number is Sylvan 0-2183.

C. T. L.

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

145  
41-276

October 7th, 1941.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
Canterbury Apartments,  
1746 N. Cherokee Ave.,  
Hollywood, California.

My dear Sherman:-

I am at home today, but just received and enjoyed reading your volume which was good to the last drop, and I am, therefore, dictating this reply to Miss Starr by Telephone.

The clause to which I am about to call your attention will, I think, serve as a support to the backbone of Mr. Milk Toast. This clause, as you recall, is in our contract with Lasky and Warners have taken over that contract from him, and, therefore, the stipulation therein will stand as far as we are concerned. The clause which I wish to call to your attention is item 17, on pages 8 and 9 of the contract, to wit:

"17. Without in any way limiting any of the other provisions hereof, Lasky shall have the absolute and unlimited right for the purpose of any photoplays, based wholly or partly on said work, to make such changes, variations, modifications, alterations, adaptations, arrangements, additions in and/or eliminations and omissions from said work and/or the characters, plot, dialogue, scenes, incidents, situations, action, language and theme-, thereof, and the music and lyrics, if any, thereof, in whole or in part, and to add to and include in such photoplays such language, speech, songs, music, lyrics, dancing choreography, sound, action, situations, scenes, plot, dialogue, incidents and characters as Lasky, in his uncontrolled discretion may deem advisable, it being the intention hereof that Lasky shall have the absolute and unlimited right to use said work and each and every part thereof, for photoplay, radio and television purposes in any manner he may, in his uncontrolled discretion, deem advisable, with the same force and authority as if Lasky were the author of said work, without in any way being accountable or liable to us or either of us for any use he may make of the work or any part thereof for such purposes; and we hereby waive the benefits of any provision of law known as the 'droit moral'

Mr. Harold M. Sherman - # 2

October 7th, 1941.

or any similar laws, and agree not to institute, support, maintain or permit any action or law suit on the ground that any photoplay produced or exhibited by Lasky, his assignees or licensees, in any way constitutes an infringement of any of their 'droit moral' or is in any way a defamation or mutilation of said work, or any part thereof, or contains unauthorized variations, alterations, modifications or changes, or translations. It is understood that although Lasky shall be the final judge of all matters hereinabove referred to, he agrees to consult from time to time with Harold M. Sherman and Clara Gabrilowitsch."

You will see, therefore, that this is a definite stipulation between Lasky and the Mark Twain Company that his judgment shall be supreme and that he is placed in the driver's seat. This means Lasky and not Mr. Harold Wallis. It seems to me that all you have to do now is to call Lasky's attention to that clause and insist on it, as the estate relied on him and on you and on Clara and not on "would-be Professor" Wallis, who is clearly more of a "professor" than one with real ability, as he apparently is simply a slick schemer for taking credit where it is not due.

If you think it best to take on Marz as agent, that is all right with me and I will pay him pro rata on the same basis I get a pro rata.

With best to you and yours and every good wish, I am,

Yours faithfully,

*Charles T. Lark*

(Charles T. Lark)



41-284

**Casa Allegra**  
**2005 La Brea Terrace**  
**Hollywood, California**

14. October 1941

My dear Harold:

I should not have started a conversation with you on the war prayer question last night when, as you know, I was expecting guests for dinner, and was not yet dressed. As a matter of fact, I had not expected any argument on the subject, feeling sure that you would be on my side. I listened to what you said, and temporarily saw the point you were making in connection with political propoganda. That scared me away from my position for a couple of minutes, but I naturally resumed my post the moment I had thought through the entire situation. You took the attitude that I did not need to protect my father's memory. Perhaps not, but with my knowledge of what he was and still is, I am convinced that he would never wish to give the impression that he is a pacifist, at a time when the freedom of men's souls is threatened by the inhuman arrogance of one who spreads his power over the entire world. My father would not consider himself, his biographical screen play, or

H. S.  
14. Oct. '41  
p. 2

even America itself ~~is~~ important features compared with the preservation of the spiritual rights of man!

I have not yet made up my mind just what I shall do, or how I shall do it, and I will certainly not act rashly. I will take two or three days or even more to consider what my move shall be. But I must ask you to try to understand it if I act solely on the consideration of what I believe my dear father would approve of.

Whatever letter I write to the papers, if I decide to send any, will be so carefully worded that it ~~will~~ <sup>should</sup> not provoke such attacks on me as you predicted. But even if I find myself in the center of a battle, I hope I have inherited enough courage from my father to face it!

Naturally, as soon as I have made up my mind what to do, I will let you know.

With best love to you both,

*Clara F. [unclear]*

**Casa Allegra**  
**2005 La Brea Terrace**  
**Hollywood, California**

41-287

17. October 1941

My dear Harold:

The enclosed letter represents what  
my guiding angel ordered me to do.

With love to you and Martha,

Yours cordially,

*Clara Jeané Smith*

Encl.

41-288

(Granite 3672)

17. October 1941

Dear Mr. Hearst:

A letter about my father, Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) appeared in the Los Angeles Examiner on October 13th. Certain comments preceded the letter which in the main conveyed a truthful impression of my father's convictions and ideals. You did, however, make one statement which can not be made without qualification. You say: "He hated war and despised the war-monger". That he hated war is true. But that he realized the necessity of war as long as the human race is diseased with hatred and greed, is also true. Not once, but ten times have I heard him say: "Our Civil War was a blot on our history, but not as great a blot as the buying and selling of negro souls".

You say: "He was devoted to principles of peace and tolerance and brotherly love". True indeed. But he was not devoted to the kind of peace that endangers the practice of tolerance and brotherly love.

You say: "He believed in the American way of life and thought". He did. And that is why he believed in making sacrifices for it. He had infinite contempt for the lower qualities of what he repeatedly called "the damned human race". But he worshipped with all the warmth of his Southern blood the higher ideals of man, which the American people must never betray.

Much as my father abhorred war with its bestial atrocities, still more did he decry the brutalities of mental or spiritual dictatorship. When you print "the Warmonger's Prayer" in your paper, you give the completely false impression that Mark Twain would today be on the side of the isolationists and defeatists. I can not remain silent before so misleading a treatment of my father's pacifistic convictions.

I would like to make the request that you publish two short extracts from a letter my father wrote the novelist William Dean Howells at the time of the Boer War. This may, in a small way, mitigate the false impression made by your article.

"Every day I write (in my head) bitter magazine articles about it, but I have to stop with this. For England must not fall; it would mean an inundation of Russian and German political degradations which would envelop the globe and steep it in a sort of middle-age night and slavery, which would last till Christ comes again. Even wrong -- and she is wrong -- England must be upheld. He is an enemy of the human race who shall speak against her now!"

. . . . .

"And so we must not utter any hateful word about England in these days, nor fail to hope that she will win in this war, for her defeat and fall would be an irremediable disaster for the mangy human race. Naturally, then, I am for England."

41-296

October 23, 1941.

Friend Hank:

Lasky is coming to New York next Tuesday and is staying at the Ritz Towers.

I presume he will get in touch with you; if not, you know where to reach him.

It will be interesting to see what Arabian Night's tale he tells you of doings out here.

The SCRIPT is now in MARVELOUS SHAPE, with the MASTER SCENE FINAL TREATMENT done. This means that only a few weeks should actually be necessary to complete the SHOOTING SCRIPT because this job we have done is PRACTICALLY the shooting script.

Howard Koch, who is being put on the writing job, is being given a plum on a platter. This is the PICTURE SYSTEM operating without regard to merit.

I don't know what you can accomplish with LASKY except to warn him that the story and dramatization had better be acceptable to the MARK TWAIN ESTATE. You warned me not to trust Lasky from the first...and I know you don't believe half he tells you, if that much.

Our relations are amiable...and it now looks like we might sell the radio rights, through a contact of MINE. If so, we will have opened up another source of revenue.

Meanwhile, I am off the picture, as of this Saturday, but will watch things as closely as I can.

See what comments you can get him to make to you while there. Incidentally, I have known Howard Koch for 15 years...he lived in the same apartment house with us when I first came to New York and I started him in writing. He is now in New York on vacation. I do not know whether Lasky will get it in his head to bring Koch around to turn some of his charm on you or not. There is much I could tell you if I were in your office.

My best to you always! Sincerely,

X

41-304

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

October 31st, 1941.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
Canterbury Apartments,  
Hollywood, California.

Dear Sherman:-

Mr. Lasky just left my office after a very short conference. He spoke very nicely about the work that you had done and said that now after nine weeks you were through. He said that he did not think the beginning or the ending of the script could be improved and there was a lot of good stuff in it, but that the criticism he had was that there was too much episodal involving a series of anecdotes instead of being a story of the life. He said that it would take some of the best talents in America to put it together as a life instead of a series of incidents. I asked him whom he proposed to have do that and he said that he was working with various ones and the selection has not as yet been made, and that probably two or three would work on it. He said that one man he had in mind was Harold Hoch, who had written a story on the life of Woodrow Wilson to be produced very shortly and who had done a wonderful job on that. He said he was also working with a man by the name of Streeter. He also had a conference a few days ago with DeVoto, but said that DeVoto was too busy on other matters to go to California at this time. He left with me a copy of your script, and I am going to take it home and read it with interest in the next few days as Lasky will be here a week or ten days. I am writing you this right after his departure as I wanted to be sure to state the above names correctly.

I also told him I had a distressing letter from Clara in which she was lamenting the fact that Spencer Tracy had been selected for the part as she thought him entirely unsuited for it. I dictated a letter to her yesterday in which I told her that I had a number of people here express themselves as preferring Spencer Tracy for the part over any one else, and I thought her lamenting might be uncalled for as I had not heard of Tracy being selected for the part and it might be a false rumor and merely by way of advertising as they deliberately print rumors to arouse the public's interest. Lasky told me today that Tracy had not been selected as he was with M. G. M., and M. G. M. would not loan him. He said that they would

Mr. Harold M. Sherman, - # 2

October 31st, 1941.

be delighted to get Tracy if they could, but it would not be possible. Clara said in her letter that she thought Claude Raines would do wonderfully well in the part, but Lasky said that he thought Raines was not a star of sufficient magnetude and that he thought he was too old.to play the younger parts required in the picture. Lasky also said that no selection had been made as yet.

With best regards, I am,

Yours faithfully,



(Charles T. Lark)



41-305 166

November 2, 1941.

Friend Lark:

Thanks for your prompt report on Lasky.

So far as he went in his comments, he was probably correct. The story, as completed by us, and approved every step of the way by Lasky, was what is known as the MASTER SCENE TREATMENT, from which the SCREEN PLAY is now developed.

The correction of any points such as the episodic, etc. would now, in the logical progression of creative events, remain to be done... and we had thought and had hoped that WE would be permitted to do it...but other arrangements had been tentatively made BEFORE we had even done our job.

The script you will have read, while complete insofar as it has gone, does not represent the full job and I do not want you to so consider it...yet you can see the possibilities of many phases of the story, as developed...and no doubt understand why poetic license had to be taken with story values in order to sustain dramatic action, etc.

The name of the writer Lasky has in mind is Howard Koch, as I reported to you...not Harold Hoch, as you have in your letter. Streeter I have heard of... and, of course, DeVoto.

Clara has not read the script, as yet, and is waiting for me to go over it with her...but I have had a frightful siege with abscessed teeth, with the fourth one pulled just three days ago and jaw still sore.

Please report to me frankly what you think so far as we were able to go with the script. It may be difficult for you to see how this story would look, properly filled in and the stature of Twain developed in the screen play, for which this treatment only provides the framework...but I feel it forms the foundation for a powerful story.

My best to you always!

Sincerely,

11  
173  
41-315  
November 16, 1941.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
Warner Brothers Pictures,  
Burbank, California.

Dear Mr. Lasky:

In submitting to you this, my newly written stage play on the life of MARK TWAIN, which has been done since I left your employ this last October 25th, I do so with the hope and belief that this dramatization solves all other dramatic problems existing with respect to the picturization of Twain's life in your forthcoming, "THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN".

I should like to explain, so that you may thoroughly understand, the creative difficulties under which I have labored during my association with you. I wish to do this for I feel that now, for the first time, you are looking upon a FINISHED PIECE OF WORK, at my hands.

When I was first employed by you to get the TWAIN biographical material in shape, it was a stupendous job just recording, in chronological order all the possible dramatic incidents connected with his life, which might be usable in one form or another. My own mind, with five years' study of this material from all the various sources, was so cluttered with data that I had to get it "out of my system" before I could begin to think in terms of a definite well-ordered continuity.

I had no sooner gotten this far, with nothing as yet to show that represented an acceptable treatment, when I was called off the job. This was while you held an option on the purchase of the MARK TWAIN material. Certainly you were right in believing, at that time, that I was not capable of completing the assignment satisfactorily - but many other writers, of much wider screen experience than I, had tried to create acceptable treatments and failed. This was admittedly a most difficult subject "to lick".

However, when I came to Hollywood and was placed under Warner Brothers' banner, to continue work on the MARK TWAIN treatment, I had high hopes that I could at last demonstrate to you my capacity to turn in a highly acceptable treatment.

It may have seemed presumptuous of me, at the time, to have wished that I might be started out on the job ALONE, since I had given little evidence that I could get this material in final shape. But I knew inwardly what I was working toward, in my mind, and had not yet had opportunity to express. There was no way of proving this to you, of course, until and if given the chance.

I was not given that chance - through no fault of yours. You could not gamble, at that stage of developments, nor could Warner Brothers, that I would come through. And so, you placed me in collaboration with Alan LeMay, a man of broader picture-writing experience who, himself, had some fine ideas with respect to the TWAIN treatment.

I accepted this collaboration in the finest spirit, as you know, and worked unstintingly toward the end in view. But, as so often happens in a well-intentioned collaboration, one of the other writer must adapt himself to the creative style of the other. If this is not done, both writers are competing against themselves and you do not get the best work of either. In this case, because Alan LeMay was in the seniority in respect to picture experience, I gladly deferred to him.

Our first task was to develop a workable STORY LINE, something we could hang our "dramatic hats" on. In my Broadway play, I had used the death of Susy as a dramatic highlight, but we agreed that there were too many deaths in the story, with Livy's dying later - so, for the purposes of this OUTLINE, which was to contain JUST THE SCENES considered needful for continuity purposes, we switched the dramatic emphasis to LIVY'S DEATH, and eliminated Susy's. Not only that, but we synchronized Livy's death with the climactic action at the finish of the picture. Actually, as we knew, the story was over with the OXFORD AWARD scene, which made the final death of Mark Twain, transcendent as it was, an anti-climax. Yet, at the time, we could not see any way to "lick it".

You will remember that you wished Alan and me to put emphasis upon the comedy and adventure values in this STORY OUTLINE. We culled all of the best and put them in finished form, down to the actual dialogue. We were conscious, as we went along, that we had entertaining dramatic action - but there were other elements, NEEDFUL TO THE STATURE OR TWAIN AS THE GREAT CHARACTER HE WAS, which were NOT creeping into this development - and which we could see no way to PUT IN, at that point.

Because we had all agreed on the STORY OUTLINE, as laid out, I saw nothing to do but to proceed to the finish - AT WHICH TIME, I had hoped and expected that we would have an opportunity to EVALUATE what had been done - to use this CONTINUITY as a MEASURING STICK - and then go back, tear down, reassemble or create the other factors which might be missing or need to be strengthened.

BUT, this opportunity never came, for the MOMENT we had completed this full treatment, we were let go by Warner Brothers.

Let me say that I feel, in the time Alan LeMay and I were given to accomplish what we did - I think we came a long way and made a substantial contribution. BUT, we were not permitted to go far enough. And, again, I do not blame you nor Warner Brothers. You were both going upon what had been revealed on the surface - and you did not consider this enough.

I swallowed my disappointment, and went home to study and evaluate what had been accomplished to date. As you know, my relations with this entire TWAIN project are totally different than any other writer's. I bear a responsibility to the ESTATE which I feel deeply. For me to have failed the ESTATE in any way was an unbearable thought, after the many kindnesses and faith manifested in me. And I knew I had failed, up to this point, IF I had not been able to create for you and for the Estate, what I felt was my BEST WORK.

Now, with my mind freed of any outside suggestions or ideas, I set myself the task of writing a new TWAIN play, inasmuch as the dramatic rights are reserved to me...and because I felt, in this form, - A COMPACT DRAMA - I could best capture the elements we had all been missing up to now.

What are these elements?

They are the HISTORIC IMPORTANCE of the TIME in which TWAIN lived; the great humanity of the man, the qualities of greatness inherent in him and expressed through his different acts in life; the marvelous fund of humor, and yet the deep philosophic nature; the courage and integrity and fire of TWAIN'S spirit.

These elements were MISSING in our TREATMENT. They have been missing in EVERY TREATMENT thus far. They cannot be mechanized or hinted at. They have to be a natural part of the flow of the story.

We made of Twain a slapstick character and got many comedy values out of him...but these kind of adventures could have happened to any robust, outdoor character of fact or fiction. WHAT QUALITIES made Twain TWAIN? What lifted him above the common herd? What made him "like a comet, whose brilliance has lit the heavens for ever more"?

NO TREATMENT, as yet, has given us THIS TRUE and GREAT PICTURE of TWAIN.

This NEWPLAY of MINE, at last, DOES.

It accomplishes this, as you will see, by a FUSING of elements as they ACTUALLY OCCURRED in his life - by not straining mechanically or fictitiously for dramatic effect. And you now see that SUSPENSE is carried to the very end - yes, even through the DEATH SCENE, which is lifted to a new position of SPIRITUAL and DRAMATIC POWER.

Our trouble has been that we have tried to tell TWAIN'S great story on TOO BROAD a dramatic screen. To cover his life - we have hopped, skipped and jumped from his boyhood to the Mississippi, to the West, and finally to the East, giving only slighting attention to his humanly touching and tensely dramatic home life and inner struggle - a great mistake!

In our present treatment, as prepared by Alan Lelay and myself, as agreed upon by Julius Evans and yourself - as far as we had been able to go - we departed, on occasion, quite widely from ACTUAL FACTS - in the then belief that this was necessary for proper DRAMATIC EFFECT.

At that time, the episodes with GENERAL GRANT, while appealingly dramatic, did not seem to fit into the larger story. In my previous play on TWAIN, Grant's contact with Twain, and Twain's securing the rights to publish his Memoirs, was really an appendage. It had no part in the "warp and woof" of the play. As such, beyond its historic importance, it had no real reason for being in the play.

BUT NOW, there has come to me a WAY, whereby GRANT and TWAIN, together, LOOM as GREAT FIGURES against the background of their times...and all the FEELING we wished to get in the story of TWAIN'S MATURE CHARACTER and STATURE, now becomes evident - with GRANT'S influence carrying through to the end!

You will see, too, how, with the minimum of dramatic expenditure, we are able to introduce - in this dramatization - PAIGE'S TYPESETTER, the WEBSTER PUBLISHING HOUSE DEBACLE, and the GRANT MEMOIRS - all of those factors exerting dramatic pressure on TWAIN...with SUSY'S DEATH now a greater blow...and LIVY'S DEATH omitted entirely, but implied. The OXFORD AWARD takes on a new humanized quality now, under this handling. And all the other elements we KNEW had, ultimately, to be gotten into the dramatization, of TWAIN'S LIFE, are now to be found, naturally present. This is because the STORY, at last, is right and as it should be.

I do not know how I could have come upon this development any sooner. I have "sweated blood" over this project for years - believing that I could do this job... and when I told you it was the greatest disappointment of my life that I had been taken off this picture, I meant it. This was not just a job to me. It was my opportunity to make such talents as I believed I possessed, count for something in what should be one of the finest and most moving stories ever brought to the screen - in addition to its humorous, adventurous features.

Actually, Mr. Lasky, you have two GREAT FEATURE PICTURES in TWAIN - and it is regrettable if you cannot YET arrange to produce his life in this manner. You have a powerful picture up to his WINNING OF LIVY...and my NEW PLAY demonstrates, I believe, that you now have an equally and even more powerful picture from this point on - in his life.

You will remember that it was his later life story which formerly worried us. We have strained to put in lines of dialogue characteristic of Twain and actually uttered by him as well as incidents...but NOTE how naturally these lines fall into place in the NEW PLAY, as well as the incidents...and NOTHING is out of character that he does... or too much the clown, or slapstick or buffoon!...That's because we finally are dealing with the BASIC, REAL SPIRIT of TWAIN in expression.

Mr. Lasky, I have sent copies of this play to the THEATRE GUILD which is interested in producing it, knowing that the picture rights have been sold. I am having fresh copies typed in New York...but because I know TIME MUST BE THE ESSENCE in your own plans for picturization, I am having my ORIGINAL CARBON of the play brought to you AT ONCE.

I know your new writers, IF you find my play to be what I say it is, will be helped and guided immeasurably in development of the SCREEN PLAY. I know, too, that you will be fair in arranging such compensation for me as you feel I have merited. Actually, I would like to feel that I have earned the right to be put back on the picture and to continue through now to the end - on the screen play. Warner Brothers may even be interested in associating with me in some manner in the stage play, or with the Theatre Guild.

Mr. Lasky, we both have a great equity in MARK TWAIN. For me to have repeatedly asserted that I could accomplish what we all desired - WITHOUT DOING IT - would have been idle talk. I think now that you will find I have been able to DEMONSTRATE my complete ability. If so, how can we get together now - on a NEW BASIS - to serve each other and Warner Brothers to the best possible advantage? I would like to hear from you before I have completed other plans.

My warmest regards!

Sincerely,

MY PRIVATE PHONE in case  
you need to call me -  
HILLSIDE 7662 (Hollywood)

41-316

November 17, 1941.

Dear Fred:

Thank you for your assuring news about the THEATRE GUILD'S interest. Even with the picture rights already sold, I am CERTAIN, with you in this NEWLY WRITTEN play of mine on MARK TWAIN - the GUILD or any other good producer, will make a fortune!

Fred, I am so eager for you to READ this play. I can see you in it ALL THE WAY THROUGH: You have that priceless whimsical, boyish, lovable, human quality that NO ACTOR can PRETEND TO HAVE...when he DOESN'T NATURALLY POSSESS IT. And TWAIN was a BOY, who NEVER GREW UP at heart.

CONFIDENTIALLY - LASKY has not treated me as he should. Without meaning to - simply because of the system in the picture business - he did not give me a chance to do what I wanted to do on the TREATMENT and LET ME GO, the instant I had finished it, (which he had me work out with another writer he had hired.)

THIS PLAY will be MY ANSWER To LASKY...and I think it will prove an EYE-OPENER to him.

I KNOW it is far and away the best thing I have ever done...and I hope you will be able to say it is one of the finest plays you have ever read. It SHOULD BE, with the splendid subject matter available to me...and yet, writer after writer has tried to make the TWAIN LIFE STORY JELL - and failed.

I practically discarded my former play, good as it was in spots...in doing this NEW VERSION.

If the GUILD decides to do this play with you... I would want to work with the director in staging it... and would want them to pay my expenses to New York and back and expenses while there, in addition to an advance. I cannot conceive of anything GREATER for you to do...and I hope, Fred, that you can get QUICK ACTION.

I have OWED you and your family a debt for some time now - after all the heartaches we went through together on our radio venture - and it is my prayer that TWAIN will atone for everything.

My love to you, Mrs. Stone, Paula and Carol, in which Mrs. Sherman joins...



**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

41-318

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

November 19, 1941

Mr. Harold M. Sherman  
Canterbury Apartments  
1746 N. Cherokee Ave.  
Hollywood, California

Dear Harold:

First I'd like to thank you for your fine letter in which you give such an interesting and honest analysis of your relationship to the Mark Twain treatment. I particularly like your evaluations of what we have and have not achieved in the treatment this far. I admired your spirit in assuming your own burden of responsibility and your forthright attempt to do something about it.

Under these circumstances, I wish it were possible for me to agree with even one tenth of the claims you make for your "new" play. I read it with the greatest eagerness and hoped to find in it some answer to our problems for the screen. I regretted to find only a re-doing of your original play with a great deal of its former warmth omitted. The original did not lack sincerity or character development; it lacked dramatization. This version does not remedy, it merely aggravates the faults of its original.

Although I appreciate your purpose in using General Grant as you do, taking two full scenes in two separate acts to achieve this results in anything but a tightly knit dramatic structure - in fact, for the first part of the play, one wonders if General Grant or Mark Twain is its protagonist. Were it not for the title, there might be an even toss-up!

I could go on indefinitely indicating the things that seem to me to be dramatically wrong with the play, but I should like to make only one point. I can find nothing new in it that we have not already fully discussed or that could be of value any more than the work you have already contributed in your original play, in the chronology and idea charts, and in the several treatments written first alone, then in collaboration.

We made a decision to tell this story of Mark Twain in one great picture. The fact that it is difficult is a challenge -

VITAPHONE

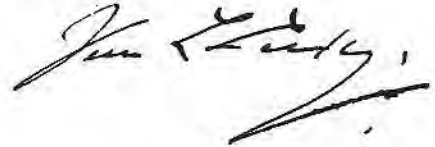
not an indication of defeat. Your criticisms are all valid and concur with our own, with de Voto's, with Howard Koch's and with everyone else whose opinion we value.

Believe me, I wish I could shout "Hurrah!" and call you in and congratulate you, but I must continue to be as straightforward and honest as I have always tried to be in our dealings together.

There is no real news to tell you of progress since we have only just begun to get under way again.

With all good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Leedy", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

41-320

November 24, 1941.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
Warner Brothers,  
Burbank, Cal.,

Dear Mr. Lasky:

A difference of opinion, as has often been said, "makes horse races". I have had other expert opinions on my new play "Mark Twain", declaring it to be incomparably better than my first.

Obviously, in considering the two mediums of entertainment, stage and screen, a playwright may find it advisable to follow certain dramatic phases of an individual's life and emphasize certain incidents which would not be practical or as desirable on the screen.

But for you to say that, in the newly written play, I have contributed nothing that "has not already been fully discussed or that could be of value any more than the work already contributed in the original play, chronology, idea charts, several treatments written first alone and then in collaboration," is not in accordance with quite apparent facts.

You have hired new writers now for the express purpose of creating new and further adaptations of the material I have collected and prepared, individually, through my first written play, chronology, idea chart, treatments, and the treatment done in collaboration.

These new writers are being paid for taking this present material, above referred to, utilizing what they and you deem best and suitable in it, and building upon it with their new versions or adaptations of scenes, incidents and characterizations to the end that the screen play you want is ultimately achieved.

Any time they take material and create a new method of presenting it or a new scene from it or a new relationship of character or situations, this treatment or handling is original with them.

In the same manner, much of what I have now done in the creation of my new play on TWAIN is original with me, and has never been discussed with anyone at any time, nor is this work contained in any of the material prepared by me heretofore in chronology, idea charts, several treatments, and the treatment done in collaboration.

The new and original scenes, ideas, adaptations, characters and other dramatic elements in this newly written play on "MARK TWAIN" are as follows:

1. The use of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn as actual life-sized characters, figments of Mark Twain's imagination, who talk to him in Scene 2, Act I, and help him in his creation of "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer". (Heretofore, Tom and Huck were only used as unspeaking, pantomimic images in the last scene of the original play and subsequent treatments.)
2. The development of the scene with General Grant wherein Mark reads aloud the messages written by Grant and answers his written comments and queries, with Mrs. Grant introduced as a character, participating in both Grant scenes.
3. The use of Mr. Dalton (Hitherto only referred to by name) head of the Stewart Publishing Company, a new character who contests for the publishing rights to Grant's Memoirs against Mark, in a dramatic scene.

4. The dove-tailing of the Grant, Paige invention, and Webster Publishing House projects and difficulties, and carrying them forward in the story action.
5. The use of the bell tollings, announcing Grant's death, as an integral part of the dramatic action and background for a scene wherein Mark's financial collapse is shown and wherein, also, he pays tribute to America, in the presence of Susy, through his inspired words on "North and South".
6. The new scenes with Col. Rogers and Mark's confession of his financial collapse to Livy and his daughters, with the "twist finish" to the scene of Livy's having recovered the last \$1500 given to Paige, including Mark's reference to Grant's famous line, "...stick it out if it takes all summer".
7. The synchronization of the creditors' meeting, now taking place in Mark's home, with Mark's leaving that afternoon on the first leg of his round-the-world lecture tour in an effort to earn sufficient money to pay his debts. Also use of the Bell scene at this point.
8. Mark's paying tribute to Livy in a love scene in the Langham hotel as they are going over their bills and just prior to receiving news that Susy is ill and not coming abroad...with mention of the Oxford award and entrance of an English reporter who asks about the "report of Mark's death". Livy's appeal for Mark to go on to Oxford and receive the award despite the fact she and Clara are returning to States to be with Susy - and Mark's agreeing to do it - so that we have situation of Mark's getting the award after he learns of Susy's death. (All of which is a new adaptation and arrangement of the material previously outlined and created)
9. The scene having to do with the installing of

9. (continued) a telephone in Mark's home, his attempted use of it, and his referring to the typewriter and fountain pen as two other new inventions he has been having trouble with.
10. The scene wherein Mark puts on the Oxford cap and gown to show old Tom and Huck on their visit, and the establishing of his still laboring to pay off his debts, even after Susy and Livy are gone.
11. The novel and original use of General Grant, Susy and Livy as figments of Mark's imagination who appear to him when his mind wanders, just before the death scene, and with whom he thinks he talks - including a new scene with Dr. Quintard and Clara, and a new scene and idea in the visit of the reporter who tells Mark that his debts have been paid in full. The suspense of Mark's heroic attempt to pay off his bills thus being carried to the very last.

I note that you say in your letter that nothing new has yet been accomplished by the new writers on the material and there is nothing, as yet, new to report, but I would appreciate being advised from time to time, and being able to work in close association with you wherever possible to the end that the best interests of Twain may be served.

I have had another expression of interest from New York in the radio rights. Did you have any success or developments with respect to this when east?

You might be interested to know, with respect to your reported BOY SCOUT picture, that I was, for some fifteen years, one of the outstanding sport and adventure writers for BOYS LIFE, several hundred of my stories having been published by this magazine.

Best wishes!

Sincerely,

41-323

**Casa Allegra**  
2005 La Brea Terrace  
Hollywood, California

1. December 1941

My dear Harold:

Nothing would give me more pleasure than to send you the kind of message that you would like to receive regarding your movie script. Unfortunately, I am distressed and embarrassed, because of two conflicting emotions. I would like to please you and Martha, yet sincerity demands that I do just the opposite.

When Mr. Lasky told me over the telephone the other day that your Mark Twain script was unusable, I hoped that his opinion might be biased. I am sorry, however, to say that having now read the manuscript myself, I am at a loss to understand from what angle it was written. It is non-biographical, and the fictional trend is all towards falsification of the personalities that are represented in this scenario.

I think for both of us it is better that I say no more than this. Further critical analyses would only cause pain on both sides,

H. S.  
1. Dec. '41  
p. 2

and would, in any case, be futile.

Looking forward to having a talk on  
the psychic side of life, in which we all three  
are so much interested, believe me, with the  
best of wishes,

Yours cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cerafa Linton". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed text "Yours cordially,".



41-325

December 1, 1941.

Dear Clara:

In all of what you say in your note, I am in agreement.

In this, a carbon copy of the letter I sent to Mr. Lasky with my new play, you will see that my evaluation coincides with yours.

My earlier enthusiasm for the work we were doing was based upon my expectation of what would be accomplished in the ultimate. But this opportunity was never granted and yet Lasky had okayed everything we had done thus far.

You will note, by my own criticism in this letter to him, how I have felt about everything done to date, and why I sought, as soon as I was freed of other thoughts and designs, than my own, to indicate dramatically the real direction your father's life should have taken.

The curse of motion picture writing is one's being compelled to meet the collective ideas and desires of producer and collaborator in order to get anything accomplished at all. For me to have stood out against Lasky, his associate Julius Evans, and my collaborator, Alan LeMay, at that stage of the work, would have meant that I would have been put off the picture entirely.

I was mistakenly hopeful that, once having completed the outline desired, it could be demonstrated that much of the material created, especially the fictionized, unreal part, did not belong.

I am sure Lasky, himself, did not see what I saw missing and wrong in this first collaborative treatment - and it was only when certain things were pointed out to him by possibly Hal Wallis and others, that he began to realize the qualities and factors lacking.

Warners intended to put other writers on this assignment from the start anyway, regardless of the merit or de-merit of the script turned in by us. And there is no reason to believe that we still will not come close to realizing the kind of picture we have hoped, from the start, to achieve.

Clara, there is so much insincerity and dishonesty in this business, it is disheartening. Whatever may have been the shortcomings of my new play, I know you can see in it the true concept of your father and the spirit and qualities that should and must animate the picture.

Of course, Lasky will admit no good or new thing in the play and will probably try to make me the goat of this first treatment to save his own face.

I knew that you would be distressed by this continuity that LeMay and I were working on under Lasky's direction and supervision and I told him frankly that I did not think you should see it until it was finished. While it was technically finished when LeMay and I were taken off the job, it did not represent a finished work to me - and my new play is evidence of this. But now, in the light of developments, it was necessary for you to see all that has been done to date.

Under the existing circumstances, I ask you now, in what is certain to be a difficult period for you, to withhold your final judgment, listen to Lasky's explanations and declaration of present plans, and hold the faith that everything is going to work out, as it should.

We both are entitled to see the script which is ultimately prepared for "shooting" and can, I am sure, do something about it, if need be. If Lasky, himself, has awakened to the wrongness of much of what was done in this treatment as he wanted it done, then real progress has been made.

This has been anything but an easy experience for me. I have done my utmost under most difficult and inhibiting conditions and will continue to do all possible toward the one successful and right end in view.

Thank you for your most considerate note. Martha and I hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,

41-326

December 1, 1941.

Friend Lark:

May I start this letter to you by apologizing for having been a DAMN FOOL?

This makes me feel better, at least - and saves you from calling me one.

In the white heat of my attempted collaboration with Alan Lomax, I should not have made extravagant claims about our TREATMENT. I have always been cursed with a super abundance of enthusiasm and the ability to "see the end from the beginning". Looking ahead, with the keenest of enthusiasm and anticipation, I could see the completed screen play of MARK TWAIN - as I thought it should be done! Everything I did - daily - whether compelled to accept the judgment and desires of others at the moment - was done with the faith and expectation that any wrong stuff could be ironed out and eliminated later. I had taken too long, in Lasky's estimation, trying to do a FINISHED JOB before - and NOW we had been instructed to go full speed ahead on the OUTLINE drawn up and get this job done FIRST. My copy of letter to LASKY, which I am enclosing, explains my feelings in the entire matter. I did not end up proud of the TREATMENT because it did not represent, when we were taken off the job, what I had intended it should be...and this NEW PLAY comes close to demonstrating, insofar as it concerns the later life of TWAIN, how I feel it should have been treated.

I have not heard what you think of the NEW PLAY, a copy of which I had delivered to your office a week or so ago - but I will be surprised if you do not think it immensely better than the treatment, on the whole.

I read the play to Clara the other night and, aside from some comparatively minor criticisms, she seemed to like it. She does not like the treatment and I do not blame her.

Lasky does not admit that there is anything new in the play that was not contained in one or a number of other things already prepared, which, of course, is not true. If you had read all the material you would readily see many original ideas and adaptations.

However, I feel better in mind and heart for having prepared this new play and having expressed myself to Lasky, offering this criticism of the work thus far done before any comment or indication had been given to me by anyone as to the evaluation of the treatment.

Hereafter, no matter how effective any piece of creation may be, I will not go on record until the job has been completed by me, to the best of my ability. There will be no more anticipation that the stuff is going to be "great", no more premature use of adjectives...

I feel this situation deeply at the moment. It looks as though we would get a proposal for production of the play - and I see now that we DID clearly reserve the dramatic rights...so I hope to have made a valued contribution in this department if things work out as they may.

You have been swell throughout and I somehow know that this whole project is going to have a happy ending, despite the grief one has to go through in this picture business.

I did the best I could under existing conditions - I was only one mind in four having to do with everything that was desired in this first treatment - and no chance was given for any check-back, revision or basic alteration. I certainly do not deserve to be made the "goat" or the "fall guy" for Lasky.

The fifth abscessed tooth is to be pulled this week. Am sending the newlyweds something! Best to you!

41-327

CLASS D unq.No. 78459

Copyright Office  
 Of the United States of America  
 THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
 \* \* \* WASHINGTON \* \* \*

*Certificate of Copyright Registration*

This is to certify, in conformity with section 55 of the Act to Amend and Consolidate the Acts respecting Copyright, approved March 4, 1909, as amended by the Act approved March 2, 1913, that ONE copy of the

dramatic composition,

named herein, not reproduced for sale, has been deposited in this Office, under the provisions of the Act of 1909, and that registration of a claim to copyright for the first term of twenty-eight years has been duly made in the name of

Harold Morrow Sherman,

1746 N. Cherokee Ave.,

Hollywood, Calif.

Title: Mark Twain. A dramatization of the Life of America's Great Humorist. By Harold Sherman, (Harold Morrow Sherman), of United States.

Copy received

Dec. 1, 1941

Entry: Class

D unq.No. 78459

[SEAL]

*C. L. Rowe*  
Register of Copyrights

**Casa Allegra**  
**2005 La Brea Terrace**  
**Hollywood, California**

41-332

3. December 1941

Dear Harold:

Thank you for your gracious letter.

Mr. Lasky is not returning until the  
end of the week, so I don't know just when we  
will have our meeting; but soon after <sup>he</sup> I shall  
expect to see you and Martha.

In the meantime, my best wishes to  
you both.

Affectionately yours,



Encl.

1741 41-344  
RECORDED 21, 4

Dear Howard: [mark]

I have been glad, as I told Mr. Lasky at the time, if I were not to go through to the finish with Mark Twain, that you got the assignment - but I was hardly prepared, after all the years we have known you, for your not having gotten in touch with us when you returned from your vacatbn.

Does Hollywood "credit" mean more to you than old friends and all the other things in life that are really ~~worth~~ worthwhile? I am not ~~resentful~~, I am only hurt that you could conceivably do this.

My interest in the destiny of this Mark Twain picture reaches far beyond personalities - and I sincerely and earnestly hope you do a MAGNIFICENT job...in fact, you MUST!

My best wishes to you - Harold.

Martha and the girls join in greetings!





Chateau Elysée

8930 FRANKLIN AVENUE  
HOLLYWOOD

188  
41-345  
Palm Springs, Calif.  
Dec. 21, 1941.

Dear Harold:

Your letter came as quite a shock - as you will readily understand when you know all the facts. Here they are:

Mr. Lasky called me when I was in New York to tell me that he and Mr. Warner wished me to take over the Mark Twain assignment. My first query was about you. I accepted the assignment when he informed me that your work on it was finished - in other words that my taking it over could have no bearing on your connection with it. I also understood, but apparently misunderstood, that you had left, or were leaving, Hollywood. Probably he meant the Studio and I thought he meant Hollywood. ... I left New York two weeks later and arrived in Hollywood having no idea that you were still here - hence your misunderstanding of why I did not get in touch with you.

You should know me well enough by now, Harold, that credits do not mean so much as friends - in fact, they don't mean very much at all. When Mark Twain is all finished, if I happen to be the one to finish it, I have had in mind to see that your credit is established beyond any doubt. If the authors' list is burdensome I shall be perfectly willing to forgo any titular credit. It would mean very little to me and it would help you a great deal in getting started out here.

I can assure you that I approached this assignment with fear and trepidation. Although the material is rich, the problem of forging a unity out of such a diffused life is one of the most difficult things any one could tackle. I'm trying as hard as I can, Harold, for the sake of the picture and for all concerned with it. If it comes out as we would wish it, that will be a reward in itself.

Best Christmas wishes and love to each  
of the Four Shermans

As ever,

*Howard*  
I'll call you upon my return from Palm  
Springs - a week or so

42-08

175

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

January 2nd, 1942.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
Canterbury Apartments,  
Hollywood, California.

My dear H. M.:-

I have been housed up with the grippe for something over a week, and before that I had a boil at the end of my nose, all of which did not exactly put me in a very good condition. I understand that you too have been having trouble with ulcerated teeth, etc., and, therefore, hope the New Year is going to treat us a lot better.

I received a clipping from Mr. Lasky a few days ago taken from the Hollywood Variety, Friday, December 19th, which reads as follows:

"FRANKLIN GOING EAST  
ON 'TWIN' LEGIT.

Dwight Frankling heads east in two weeks for contract huddles with William Ainley on latter's forthcoming legit production, 'Meet Mark Twain'. Franklin, character designer on C. B. DeMille's Paramount film, 'Reap the Wild Wind', is considered a leading authority on Mark Twain and has been asked to supervise casting, wardrobe designing and settings characteristic of the period."

I do not know what this means and suggest that you talk it over with Mr. Lasky.

I read your new play with much interest, and parts of it I like very much, but I think you will have to cut out all the death bed scene as it makes a wrong kind of an ending for a writer who is known the world over for his wit and humor, as it seems wrong to have a pretty tale end in a morgue. I liked the Grant episodes very much and there are just a lot of things I would like to talk over with you, but cannot very well do it at this distance.

LAW OFFICES

ABRAHAM L. BERMAN

CABLE ADDRESS "ALBERMAN N. Y."  
TELEPHONE MURRAY HILL 2-7930

551 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

42-37

March 13th, 1942

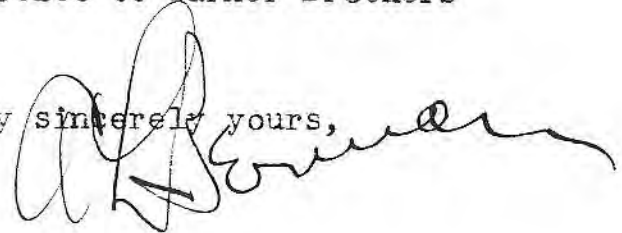
Mr. Harold Sherman  
c/o Warner Brothers  
Burbank, California

Dear Mr. Sherman:-

My client, Howard Kyle, claims an interest in the play "MARK TWAIN". On April 16th, 1936 you entered into an agreement with him granting to him Five (5%) Percent of all royalties you may receive, from this play. Since the play has been purchased by Warner Brothers a consideration naturally has been paid and my client will be entitled to Five (5%) Percent of any sums received by you.

I will appreciate your writing me and advising me whether I am correct in this assumption. I am making no demand or giving no notice to Warner Brothers awaiting a reply from you.

Very sincerely yours,



ALB:ja

*I and I just full fulfilled that agreement with him when Harry Moses took an option on the play and paid me \$1500 advance. He sent Howard Kyle my check for \$75.00 immediately, represent his five percent. Harry Moses' ~~as your~~ death cancelled the contract. Since that time the ~~dramatic~~ ~~rights~~ have not been sold but then*

42-40

March 16, 1942.

Friend Lark:

I've kept in touch with George occasionally, whose little family we've fallen in love with...and have been sorry to learn you haven't improved as much as you would like...and that Mrs. Lark has had her ups and downs, too.

Now, I'm writing to tell you two things. Lasky has re-hired LeMay and me self to do the screen play after all! He spent thousands of dollars on Warner writers...and JUNKED all their work...and we are really being given a chance to do this time what we weren't permitted to accomplish before! Isn't this a crazy business? I have been out here - drawing no salary since October last - and had to borrow money on my car to exist...and have just worked this last half week...

I would greatly appreciate it if you will let me pay you your quarter out of the second payment which should be coming along by June first...as I desperately need the current money to get my head above water. Great progress is now being made and I doubt if I will be on the payroll beyond April 1st or much beyond. The second payment on the purchase price of the picture rights is to be made, as you know, when production starts and Lasky is pushing this date up as early as possible.

My new book, "Thoughts Through Space" came out in New York this past week, and I see that Harry Hansen, literary critic for World-Telegram gave you some publicity. I am sending you an autographed copy of the book which contains two stories on Twain, too. I told your "gorilla story" in my section of the story. You should get a kick out of it!

Enclosed is a copy of letter from Kyle's lawyer and also my reply, so you will be advised if Kyle or Berman walk in on you, I think he hasn't a leg to stand on...and it's fortunate that we still have retained the dramatic or stage rights. Eugene S. Bryden, producer, had to postpone production until fall but intends to put Fred Stone in role then...and Kyle will probably yell some more.

I couldn't even pay my income tax...so you know I've been hard hit...but other things are coming along and in several months I should be o.k. Best to you!

42-39

*Zeppo Marx, Inc.*  
AGENCY

CRESTVIEW 6-4161

8732 SUNSET BOULEVARD  
WEST HOLLYWOOD

March 16, 1942

Warner Brothers Pictures, Inc.,  
Burbank, California

Attention: Legal Department

Gentlemen:

I am signing the contract between Warner Brothers Pictures, Inc., and myself dated March 12, 1942. Please be advised that I have heretofore written a dramatic play based upon the life of Mark Twain. It is accordingly understood and agreed between us that all rights granted to the Producer in Paragraph (6) of said contract shall apply only to such work as I may perform in connection with "MARK TWAIN" during the course of my employment at Warner Brothers Pictures Inc., and the rights granted to the Producer thereunder shall not apply to said dramatic play, "MARK TWAIN", heretofore written by me.

Very truly yours,

Harold Sherman

HS:c

42-11

March 16, 1942.

Mr. Abraham L. Berman,  
551 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Berman:

You are not correct in your assumption.

In the agreement signed by Howard Kyle, April 16, 1936, I agreed to pay him five percent of my royalties on the stage production of "Mark Twain" in full for all service and interest of every kind in connection with interesting me with the subject matter and introducing me to Charles T. Lark, attorney for the Mark Twain estate."

I faithfully fulfilled this agreement with Mr. Kyle when the late Harry Moses took an option on the play and paid me \$1500.00 advance royalty. I promptly sent Howard Kyle my check for \$75.00, representing his five percent. Harry Moses' death cancelled the contract.

Since that time the stage rights have not been sold but there is definite promise that my Mark Twain stage play will be produced this fall, in which case, the moment I receive any royalties from it, I will gladly remit five percent of same to Mr. Kyle.

Meanwhile, if Mr. Kyle continues to write derogatory letters concerning me to producers or make derogatory comments, which are entirely without justification and only the figments of his own mind, I shall be compelled to take some action against him on my own account.

I hope this clarifies the situation. Thank you for writing me as you have.

Sincerely,

LAW OFFICES

ABRAHAM L. BERMAN

CABLE ADDRESS "ALBERMAN N.Y."  
TELEPHONE MURRAY HILL 2-7930

551 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

49-28

March 28th, 1942

Harold M. Sherman, Esq.  
1746 N. Cherokee Avenue  
Hollywood, California

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I delayed answering your letter awaiting a talk with Mr. Kyle. I have just completed our meeting and he vehemently denies making any derogatory statements or writing any such letters as you state, to producers. He would like to have you give him the name of any one producer who will state that he made any such statements or wrote any such letters.

Now with respect to the agreement, it is true that the agreement provides for a stage production. However, Mr. Kyle feels that he has been eliminated entirely and it was the understanding that you would make every effort to get the play on so that revenue would be forthcoming to him. Since you have sold the play for pictures and since he claims to have given you the original idea and put you in touch with the people controlling the idea, he should receive some compensation from you out of your picture money. Personally, I think that this might be a good time to adjust the entire matter and I would be pleased to entertain any offer of settlement for all future claims by Mr. Kyle. This is my own thought and does not come from him.

Please let me hear from you.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



Alb/Hj

42-29

March 30, 1942.

Friend Lark:

George and Helen and Blitzkrieg Loy were over for dinner yesterday...and George and I took off several pounds playing ping pong. But the individual with the unlimited endurance is their personable, lively youngster! Whew! We enjoy the whole Lark family very much.

I am enclosing a copy of Abraham L. Berman's reply to my letter. He's at 551 Fifth Avenue, and I await word from you before answering this last epistle...but I want to acknowledge it, referring Berman to you!

Remember my sending you a copy of a letter that Kyle sent to Lasky some months ago, seeking to embarrass me with him? Remember Kyle coming in, one time, to try to discredit me with you? ...I have talked with other theatrical personages who have told me on the side, "We haven't wanted to hurt Kyle's feelings but if we produced Twain, we couldn't and wouldn't have him in the part. He could never do it!" Etc.

I have written probably half a dozen radio scripts for Kyle for which I have never charged him, trying to do something for him from time to time. I gave him a part in my second Broadway play and he flubbed his lines and proved no help whatsoever. I gave him a chance to try to sell the Twain play to his producer friends like John Golden, but when they heard he expected to play the part, they went cold.

Incidentally, the picture is not being based on the play, as such...and a new contract was made. I still retain the dramatic rights...and the stage play still may be done this fall. I paid Kyle his 5 percent on the only moneys I ever received on the stage play when Moses paid an option....

I did not ask Kyle to introduce me to the Twain Estate. He did that on his own and phoned me one day and said, "Harold, it's all fixed". He has been forward and aggressive and a nuisance all the way through, as you so well know...

I leave it to you to take care of Berman. Incidentally, I have the original letter Kyle wrote to Lasky, a copy of which I sent you...and I have other letters



from Kyle wherein he has insinuated that I had kept him from playing Twain on Broadway, etc.

I think if you intimate to Berman that we will make it most embarrassing for Mr. Kyle if he should try to pursue this matter in court, he may back water. I cannot conceive that Berman, who has known Kyle for years, is not aware of his eccentricities by this time. Kyle's whole life has been a misfit...and that of a trouble-maker.

I suppose this is one of the penalties of making any progress in life with anything. The leeches and the parasites begin to show their heads. You have helped me kill off some bad associations of this kind, for which I will be eternally grateful.

Now take care of this man Kyle for me!

George tells me you won a great legal victory in Albany! Congratulations! Please tell me the nub of it for it must have been a difficult case...and should have sent the Lark high reputation to new highs. Guess these other lawyers who turned the case down are still wondering how you did it!

My regards to the office girls and to Bernard!

Are you ever coming out this way?

Did you get the book, "Thoughts Through Space"? Watch for reviews on it in the Times and Herald-Tribune.

Best to you and yours!

Sincerely,

P.S. Don't forget to tell me how to reply to Berman with respect to this last letter.

42-31

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

April 2nd, 1942.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
1746 North Cherokee Ave.,  
Hollywood, California.

Dear Mr. Sherman:-

This is one of the days Mr. Lark is not in the office. He was in yesterday, but was too rushed to reply to your letter received yesterday. He phoned me this morning and asked me if I would drop you a note to tell you that he thought there was no use in corresponding any further with that fellow Berman. Mr. Lark called him up and he told Mr. Lark that Kyle was down and out and needed money very badly and wondered if we could get together and give him something and take a general release for everything.

Mr. Lark also wants to know what you were getting from Lasky per week and how long you worked, and whether you are still working for Lasky.

He received your new book "Through Space" and thanks you for it.

Mr. Lark has been over-working again and has been laid up a bit, but I believe with a rest he will be himself very soon.

I trust all goes well with you and your family. We all send our best.

Sincerely yours,

*Helen L. Starr*  
(Helen L. Starr)  
Secretary to Mr. Lark.

42-63

April 27, 1942.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
Warner Brothers,  
Burbank, Cal.,

Dear Mr. Lasky:

I have given this completed screen play, THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN, the most careful study.

I think the first half, up to the Cooper Union sequence is, for the most part, magnificent. But, from this point on, there is no believable evolvment of the man that the world has come to love and recognize as Mark Twain.

I am sorry to feel compelled to say this in the most positive language I can command because I feel it so deeply, after long checking and re-checking:

We have here, in this Second Half, the picture of a boorish, uncouth, surly, ill-mannered, self-centered man - giving us no evidence of the transcendent spirit and illuminating soul of the real Mark Twain. We've shown no evidence of his sparkling laugh-on-a-tear humor... we've had only a grim, driving reaction to the things that have happened to him...and a self-conscious, self-advertised attempt to do something about them...not in an inspired way, but in a worldly, ungrammatical, often unpleasant way.

If you people cannot see and feel this - then I am sure it will become evident when production starts and you commence to add up the impact of these scenes.

You still are faced with the problem of presenting to the public the TWAIN the people know and love. This Twain LIVES and BREATHES in the first half...but the caterpillar never becomes the butterfly in the second...it always remains a caterpillar...and we lose all interest and feeling in a man who constantly depreciates his own efforts, refers to himself as an "old fool", uses poor grammar when he developed into one of the greatest artists in the use of the English language who ever lived...the proper turn of a line or phrase. We have very little, if any, genuine Twain dialogue and that which we have has been "improved upon" to its detriment.

I am not going to attempt any detailed outline of critical comment or suggestions in support of these statements, but will point out a few :

The transition to Cooper Union out of this montage is too abrupt. We are not prepared, as an audience, to accept Mark Twain as a speaker before a distinguished New York gathering. Simply discovering him on stage with J.B.Pond is not enough.

SUGGESTION: There needs to be worked into this montage a scene of Mark Twain's boarding an-ocean-going boat. We see a big sign "Holy Land Excursion"...the purser, near the gang-plank, is checking him in, and Sam is saying: "I'm Mark Twain - reporter for the New York Tribune and the Virginia City Enterprise..." The purser gives a smile of recognition and says; "Hello, Mr. Twain - got your Jumping Frog with you?" Other passengers, waiting to be checked in, laugh and point to Twain and murmur excitedly to themselves as Sam goes aboard...THEN CONTINUE WITH MONTAGE...and AT FINISH, after showing river steamboat, Queen of Dixie, dissolve through this the Holy Land Excursion boat docking...people crowding the rail, laughing at Mark Twain who is telling them a funny story, making some comments on the trip just ending "the old well at Damascus", or some other humorous remark, widely quoted...then show gang plank and Mark coming off...WAITING AT END OF GANGPLANK IS J.B. POND who rushes up to Twain, extending his hand, vigorously and with enthusiasm, crying: "Oh, Mark Twain - at last I've found you! My name is Pond - J.B.Pond!"

NOW - we are ready for Cooper-Union...we have had a glimpse of what Sam has been doing during these years of war or shortly after...and we KNOW, when we see him on the stage, WHO Pond is...and WHAT he has gotten Mark into!

BUT - with all our suspense over Mark's eventual meeting with LIVY, we are completely let down by this passive first contact with her...Making Mark so crude that he is easily recognizable by Charles Langdon as the old river pilot is bad... we have shown no development since his early days...and ALL human progress, either up or down, during life...The Langdons accepting him at once and inviting him to their home tips off in advance Mark's winning of Livy...and all the little obstructions and faux pas which follow mean little or nothing, either as suspense or entertainment. Mark is depicted in such an uncouth manner that we are shown no reason why a woman of Livy's breeding should fall in love with him. There is no charm about him...and having Livy take the lead in proposing to him and Mark play himself down so deplorably causes us to lose sympathy with a man who has exhibited such fighting spirit against adversity on the Mississippi and out west. If this entire sequence is handled as it should be, we will not know for certain he is going to get the girl until the end of the Jervis Langdon scene...I do not agree that we should take this romance for granted simply because our story isn't ended here...but we need to keep up the suspense throughout...and the believability... which is gone here, as done.

On page 123, Mark has progressed far beyond the point in literary knowledge and appreciation for him to be so boorish and uncouth as to say to Livy: "They're having people with names we used to start mules, in Missouri - Ralph Waldo Emerson"...and going on with such comment as "Livy, this is no better than unloading an ordinary mudcat on a passel of gods"...etc. The whole scene with Howells I see no point to...nothing is made of his calling for Mark... I do not think you will get the kind of humorous reaction to the fish pole business...it kills what should be the sincere sentiment in a little, human, excited scene with Livy, about Mark's "great opportunity to join the fraternity of the literary gods"....

On page 126...completely out of character at this stage is Mark's declaration: "I'll bust a biler fer 'em, Livy!"

And the scenes following the banquet as Mark returns home strike me as entirely wrong and out of character. Livy could be crying over the clippings, with Mark's manuscript of "Huck Finn" before her, but when Mark comes in she could tell him, directly, that she's sorry his speech worked out this way...she knows his real worth...he's made a mistake but he can overcome it by sticking to his own creative work and turning out such fine things as "Huck Finn", etc...Such a scene would be much more human and sincere...and avoid the subterfuge which Livy is made to employ...which comes across as artificial and unbelievable. Whatever else, Mark and Livy faced issues throughout their lives, unflinchingly.

SUGGESTION: Consider, if women were present at this dinner (I don't recall, without checking) that Livy herself is present. Then, imagine the drama as we show reaction upon her, with Mark dying on his feet...THEN, a human little scene between Mark and Livy, after they have left the hall, with Mark crushed... and Livy having to restore his spirit and faith in himself!

Page 137...where Mark savagely declares he's got to change himself...the "change resolution" comes too late... you don't need to emphasize this river background so much...and make Mark's struggle so self-conscious...showing him in difficulties is enough...we don't have to have it hammered into us by repeated declarations on his part...and Mark must not be anywhere nearly as physically crude as he is depicted in this second half...the audience will have scoured on him long enough ago...

Page 138...We have seen Mark's struggle - but have no indication where he has suddenly gotten the MONEY to make big investments, all of a sudden in Paige's typesetter...this scene breaks on the audience with no intertwined relationship with what has gone before...and is hard to swallow, let alone understand... from this point on, the story becomes more exposition than action... extremely talky...so much has to be explained...there are so many things Mark intends to do...

On page 142...Mark's declaration "I mean to get the stars for you, Livy!" has him expressing himself too much about his desire for achievement...he is making too self-conscious an effort to be great...and when he arrives on the heights, after this kind of talk, it leaves us, for the most part, cold. For Livy to accept this comment from Mark is to indicate that she, herself, is only interested in the attainment of fame, as a goal in life...this is a FALSE NOTE which no admirer of Twain will accept...only resent.

IF, through Mark's un-self-conscious struggles for a place in the sun...he finally finds himself on the heights...unmindful of the great success he has achieved...still humble and human...THEN, we, as the audience, RISE to ACCLAIM HIM...but not if he ACCLAIMS himself...by word and act, as to his intent in life...which makes him inglorious instead of glorious; selfish instead of unselfish, material instead of spiritual.

From 145 through to 153, the whole sequence is tremendously talky with little action. We have no feeling of sympathy for Grant because we have not met him...Mark's announcement that he intends to publish his Memoirs has no real significance to us under these circumstances...it is just so much talk on top of a great deal of other talk about his financial condition...

149-150- the "woolly bear" sequence, which sounded good to me, described, is unspeakably bad here... The audience won't get the connection...the scene will pall on them...and the public will criticize this long story which was NOT one of Twain's...and no writer can dare risk making up such a long story to put in Mark's mouth.

151-152 - the General Grant scene is slapstick... it contains no real human emotion. The uncultured blasts of Mark at this publisher are entirely false and out of character... the publisher himself is fancifully over-drawn...and one of the finest human moments between two great men in American history is unintentionally, I am sure, but nevertheless, burlesqued.

SUGGESTION: Mark should have had his scene with Grant and the publisher, more along the lines of my original dramatization...and BEFORE his conference with Rogers. Then, when Rogers is trying to get him to turn back, he springs the bombshell that he is going ahead with Grant's Memoirs...which floors Livy and Rogers...and leads us into the creditor's scene more logically and understandably.

154-157...No one can improve on Mark's own humorous lines. We have him in this creditor's scene - arrogant and rebellious against the men to whom he owes money. He is defiant and unfeeling when he says: "Seems to me I've heard that money is the root of all evil. In that case, I'm afraid you boys are going out of here mighty pure." This is not funny...and a slur on the men, however grasping, who have lost money through investing with him.

There is no evidence here of Mark having grown, of his being able to rise superbly, with it all, humanly and humorously, above adversities in life, which made him so lovable. The attitude is entirely beneath Twain - and he is made to seem mean and small. In his back-biting, we get no lift, (on page 156,) out of his flippant comments about Washington, Napoleon, etc. being dead...and he doesn't feel so well himself, etc. (a cheap vaudeville joke)...

When Mark finally declares that he'll pay 100 percent, we have no built-up sympathy and feeling for the man and it comes as a flat and uninspired promise.

(It is probably useless to refer you to the way this was handled in my play because we are so far apart in conception)

158...Again the "down note" Mark's self-depreciation which has been hammered at us all the way through until we don't care for the man ourselves and wonder that anyone else does...when he says: "May have to hunt farther, before we find somebody to listen to the old fool." There is nothing funny about this... this casting constant slurs at himself is not Twain...even though he did have disheartening moments...his brilliant sense of humor usually pulled him out so that he could even laugh at himself...

You realize, of course, that there is scarcely any humor of line or situation...natural, genuine, human humor... in this second half, which the public will expect from and about Twain. No nice light and shade.

161--Too much reference throughout to Halley's comet...I even doubt the wisdom of its use in the Cooper Union scene...but certainly not here...Mark is constantly reminding you of what a distasteful, uncouth character he is, by taking digs at himself. At first, you will argue with a person who continues to depreciate himself...after while you get disgusted and agree with him!

161--the "report of my death is greatly exaggerated" and Graham Bell's telephone are too inadequately introduced to have any value. They might better be thrown out altogether than used the way they are here...and, since the tag line in the picture depends upon this "death is greatly exaggerated" comment, it would seem wise to develop this properly somewhere in the script.

162-- here is a scene which is far-fetched, artificial drama, breaking the news to Livy at the last that he is going around the world, and her last minute efforts to go with him... Far better a simple, human scene wherein Livy knows she must make the sacrifice and stay behind with the children...hoping to join Mark abroad later...there is plenty of drama and heart-wrench in this if properly played...rather than the frantic running about to no good end or point...arriving finally at the same decision.

165--Montage...the World Tour....We've seen no delightful humorous scenes in the second half of picture... None of Mark's own dialogue to prove to our audience he CAN make t he world LAUGH...in fact, there has been nothing delightful or charming shown about Mark...and simply announcing that he is humorous or trying to indicate it when we have lived with his character and found little humor in him...is going to seem outstandingly incongruous.

171--Mark's comment to Livy: "Livy, dearest, you make me feel I could count on one vote, even if I ran on the Republican ticket..." is a false crack...I haven't checked back, but I think the Republican party was strong at this time...if it wasn't, it is still a poor crack because the Democrats are so strong now and it will seem like a current wisecrack...and take the entire scene out of character.

NOW - after arriving at this point through many talky scenes, with little action...we are asked to believe, in this scene with Livy, that the ONLY THING Mark and Livy strove for all their lives, was FAME. This impression is unmistakeable...and the actual truth is, Sam Clemens never self-consciously and designedly strove for fame in his life. He did his utmost for Livy's sake...but we make him a vain, selfish, unlikeable individual to have him willing to sacrifice everything to this ambition...and, when he arrives at the summit, we get NO INNER GLOW OF LOVE AND WARMTH FOR HIM, as a consequence.

In addition, this over-emphasizing of the Oxford award in the scene with Livy, ANTI-CLIMAXES the Oxford scene and what it means...because we've been TOLD ALL, in this scene...which takes ALL the PUNCH out of Oxford and everything that comes thereafter.

The fact that Livy is practically dying, being so established, kills any suspense and makes the scene passive and ~~uninteresting~~ expositional...The audience will be uncomfortable through the scene of Mark's singing and later realizing Livy is dead, since the fact of her passing is so telegraphed...and what is intended as sincere, loving sentiment will appear as obvious and greatly over-done to the point of boredom.

The story is over even before Oxford...and the audience interest is gone before the finale of Mark's spirit being escorted by Tom and Huck, through the window, into the sky and to Halley's comet...The business about the cats, etc. is entirely out of place in this last scene...

And the CLOSE-UP of Twain at the finish, as he smiles and WINKS, makes a mockery of what should be an inspired scene with the comet ending...It completely destroys the emotional mood which should be established at the end...IF we have seen and lived with a delightful, loveable character who has finally reached the summit through fighting, the best he knew, against all obstacles, for the love of a woman!



Mr. Lasky, I have written fully and frankly and completely trusting in your confidence. I would appreciate your taking from this letter such comments and suggestions as you feel are valid...and adding them to such other comments and suggestions as you may have received from other sources... THEN, presenting them to Alan LeMay for consideration when he returns to work on the script. I hope he will be able to see and feel what is still lacking...and sense how to put it in... I have a high regard for Alan...and I do not want any of these criticisms to be presented to him as coming from me. This is a matter that must be kept on an impersonal basis...for the good of the production of Mark Twain.

This has been a difficult assignment for me. It would have been so easy to have said I liked the script in general and let it go at that. But I have felt, on due consideration, if some of these faults became apparent to you after you had started in production...and I had tried to tell you then that this was what I had seen wrong in the script...you would not have forgiven me for not giving you my honest opinion at a time when you could have done something constructive about it.

You have had every evidence of my wholehearted interest and desire to be of service throughout. I have contributed as much as I could, at all times, under the circumstances, and the plan of creative work, as laid out.

My most fervent best wishes are with you in this production...and I pray that you will be guided right from this point on...to bring to the screen the REAL TWAIN...in FULL STATURE....but, please be sure you have him, before you starting shooting!

With warm personal regards, I am,

Sincerely,

42-64

ONE EIGHTY-ONE NORTH SALT AIR AVENUE  
BRENTWOOD, WEST LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Dear Harold, —

[4-29-42]

Thank you again for the most enriching evening that you gave us. I shall always be most grateful to you for your generous giving of self which is after all the true value of sharing —

Every one felt in harmony and suddenly the War, and life dropped away and we found one concentration going upward — I hope. That if you remain here you will come to our simple evenings with your dear wife

I'll phone you to see if we  
can have an hour before Sunday-  
With all good thoughts strong  
and permanent for you both

Sincerely  
Bessie Lasky

(222B)  
42-82

**Casa Allegra**  
2005 La Brea Terrace  
Hollywood, California

18. May 1942

My dear Harold:

I hope that you and yours have had an interesting trip thus far, and that before too long I shall have good news from you about the Jane Adams manuscript, and Mr. Breiden's (?) undertaking in the Mark Twain production.

Messrs. Lasky, Evans and LeMay came to see me a week ago, and were, of course, most gracious and affable. I said all I had in my mind and heart regarding the script, and made some suggestions that they promised to follow. In a general way I endeavored to emphasize the fact that the great lacks were humour, evidence of prosperity in Father's life, and a finer, nobler characterization of his personality. I won't go into a long dissertation now--on our conversation, for it lasted from half-past-two until half-past-six. But I must explain that there was no natural occasion when I could bring up the question of the letter you sent to Mr. Lasky, without its looking very much as if I had seen it myself. I am perfectly sure, in any case, that your criticisms must have been along the same lines that mine were, for there could hardly be a diversity of opinion on the manuscript that Mr. LeMay considered "finished"; 'though since our interview Mr. Lasky has repeated once or twice over the telephone--that they realized the scenario was not finished, and needed radical changes. They are expecting further conferences with me, which I suppose will undoubtedly take quite a bit of time and effort on my part.

+ Colwell, or vice versa, because of the  
Mason's trip. STN, etc.

H. S.  
18. May 1942  
p. 2

You will doubtless see Mr. Lark when you reach New York, and he will tell you about a proposition that has been made me by *The* National Broadcasting Company, for a series of talks about my father. Not feeling secure as to my own rights in this field, I wired Mr. Lark for information, and was told that such an undertaking on my part might conflict with rights given to you and Warner Brothers. I am, therefore, having my local attorney look after the Warner Brothers end of it, but will need some kind of written release from you also, in case Mr. Lark is right in thinking that I had been excluded from such privileges.

As soon as I get another sight at the Lasky script, I will send you a word about my reaction, unless it isn't good enough to put on paper.

It will be a great pleasure to see you and Martha out here again, and I hope that while you are gone you will not run into too many climatic extremes in the distant East.

With love to you both, and very best wishes,

Yours ever cordially,

*Para*

*P.S. Martha's most welcome letter has just come. Please thank her very much for it & give her a good hug.*

~~2200~~ 223 A  
42-86  
May 20, 1942.

Dear Clara:

It seemed good to see your friendly address on an envelope and to know it contained a message from you in this dirty, windy city of Chicago. (I should have said, "clean, refreshing message" to bring out the contrast)

So, you have finally met the Three Horsemen of the Epoch (or less) who have ridden roughshod over your father's life!

I take for granted that you have read and based your criticism on the script they sent me which was considered "finished". Certainly only the words "colorless, ordinary, homesome affect of the whole thing" adequately describe it - and I HOPE YOU SAID JUST THAT! It's what Lasky needs to jar him loose from his well-meaning but ignorant complacency.

I'm glad you didn't refer to my letter. This should be diplomatically referred to, if at all. You could say, "what did Mr. Sherman think of this script? Did he give you any expression about it?" If Lasky says, "no", he is, of course, lying. If he tries to imply I was a party to it, he is also lying. All you should know about it...is that I made no critical comment about the screen play to you, on leaving, but said I had sent in a report to Mr. Lasky on it, with such suggestions as I had. If you should express a desire to see my report - and consider it along with your own views in making any more concrete suggestions for improvement yourself...I NATURALLY CANT STOP YOU!

I hope Lasky meant it when he said he realized drastic changes would have to be made...otherwise he has no noble, inspiring figure in your father's life, as portrayed, at all. You can bet these gentlemen would be on their "good behavior"...

Insofar as I am concerned, I have no objection to your giving talks on your father's life...and think it would be grand. Whether Warner Brothers might think this was a trespass upon the dramatizing of Twain's life for possible commercial radio sponsorship later, I do not know. I'll check with Mr. Lark when I go on to New York.

Please keep me advised of script developments on the coast, good or bad.

I followed your instructions and gave Martha such a "fond hug" that it left her almost breathless and with several ribs she "is afraid" may be cracked. Martha says for you not to make such a reckless request again!

We dearly love you and miss you...and hope you will be a good girl and keep well while we are away.

Conferences with the Hull House people are going forward satisfactorily on the play and I will keep you advised from time to time on any matters I know would be of interest.

One of them is that Wilkins is joining us here again tomorrow to spend some more weeks in reading and studying the astounding material...

Great things are going to happen in our life-time...so be of good cheer!

Affectionately,  
y.

**Casa Allegra**  
2005 La Brea Terrace  
Hollywood, California

42-99

227A

26. May 1942.

My dear Harold:

I was very glad to hear from you and know that things were going well in your part of the world. It will certainly be a thrilling experience for you to read parts of the manuscript which you will be privileged to see--connected with the human race and this planet.

I was not quite sure whether you were serious or joking when you intimated that you cannot prevent my asking to see the report on the Mark Twain picture, which you sent Mr. Lasky. If serious, I suppose you have in mind that if I do not make a point of reading your report, he may be less inclined to give you credit for writing the script. As a matter of fact, you surely must realize by now that he is not going to give you any credit in any case. The enclosed clipping will, I think, prove to you that sad fact. Naturally, however, I am interested to see what your criticisms were; but I am not inclined to ask for them, unless it can be done in a way that does not arouse their suspicion of my veracity, when I state that I have not already perused your critique.

I omitted to say in my last letter that the only time your name was mentioned was when I disapproved of Mr. LeMay's description of Father's scene with the creditors. On being asked



H. S.  
26. May 1942

-2-

by him if I knew of any good account of it anywhere, I said that on the whole I thought the one you had given in your play was the best I had seen, although there might be little points that needed changing.

My own situation continues to be a very strange one. Warner Bros. speak of future conferences, and I confess I see no reason why I should give so much time and energy for their benefit, when a very different arrangement should have been made in the beginning. I even hinted at this fact in that one interview. When Mr. Evans said he wished I would give some concrete examples of improvements. I was suggesting in a general way, I replied that it was not my place to do that, since it was their job to make a good script.

Sometime, when you, Martha and I are sitting together again over a cup of tea, I will give you part of a rather lengthy story about the National Broadcasting Company proposition, and the effects of the strange contract Mr. Lark made with Warner Brothers.

This is all for today, but if I get any more news connected with our main interest, I will surely pass it on to you both. I will be careful about the hugs I send to Martha in the future. I should have known that you would make those I sent before a very brutal species.

Best love to you both, and also to your sweet daughters.



228A

42-100

May 27, 1942.

Mr. Charles T. Lark,  
Mark Twain Company,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Lark:

I have been in Chicago now for several weeks and expect to come on to New York around July 1st.

We are due the second payment of \$15,000.00 by July 1st, and I have notified Lasky of my address here.

The papers say Leaky intends to go into production June 15th. If he does, we may receive remittance earlier than the first of July. At any rate, as soon as I receive payment, I will send checks at once to you.

I will owe you, in addition, 25 percent of my salary for 2 1/2 weeks that I worked back on the picture.

I read the script before leaving Hollywood - the first part is fine; the second half very bad. I gave Lasky a detailed report of my criticisms, but did not show Clara. She wrote me, however, her criticism after reading the script, and I have to agree with her. Whether it has been changed and improved by this time, I have no way of knowing. When I see you I will have SOME story to tell you...how difficult if not impossible it is to go against the Hollywood system and get a story effectively done. My long letter told you much, months ago...but I have a sequel to it now.

Hope you are feeling much better...and expecting to see you soon...my best to you!

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, Inc.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

*[Handwritten signature]*  
**42-102**

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

May 29th, 1942

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Harold:

I was glad to receive your letter and have noted that you will be in Chicago for some further time.

We start production on June 25th and the script is finished excepting that we are making certain changes that the Director feels are necessary.

I won't send you a script until we get what we call a 'complete final'.

Mrs. Lasky joins me in sending our kindest regards to you and Mrs. Sherman.

Sincerely,

*Jesse L. Lasky*

**VITAPHONE**  
REG. TRADE MARK

42-~~100~~  
104  
229c  
May 29, 1942.

Dear Clara:

Thank you for your prompt acknowledgement of my letter and your enclosure of the news clipping. No, I do not expect much credit...and I would be happy to forego all that - IF the picture would only turn out all that we have hoped for it. A man is not popular in the picture business unless he is a "yes man", and Sherman wasn't born that way. I can work with people but refuse to be "worked by people." I have gone so emphatically on record as to what I think still needs to be done to make the screen play what it should be that it leaves Lasky no quarter. I agree with you - unless certain changes are made, I do not see how it can even prove effective entertainment, let alone an inspired portrayal of your father. BUT, we have done about all we humanly can...and I think your attitude is right...I do not see "why you should give so much time and energy for their benefit"....

I appreciate your making reference to a scene of mine - the creditors - because this is one point that I felt was particularly bad...but for me to say so seemed prejudicial. IF I had a long list of picture and play credits my WORD would be LAW. I am not infallible...but I've spent years of thought and creative work on TWAIN and given even decent consideration, I certainly could have produced a much better screen play than the last one I saw. However, miracles happen in that crazy business - so let's not give up yet.

I have not abandoned hope that the Twain play can and will be done this fall with Fred Stone - so perhaps we can then salvage some prestige and quality through such a production. I intend to get busy seeing what can be done about this when I go on to New York which now should be around July 1st.

Clara, no words can even REMOTELY convey the profound spiritual experience Martha and I are experiencing here. Very little will we be permitted to tell you yet, I am afraid...but, when conditions change for you and you can travel - and afford to come here and spend a MONTH...I would submit your name and make every effort

to gain for you the same rare privilege we are enjoying. What I am saying now is for you alone...but this is a true and authentic and scientifically provable revelation of all the universal mysteries which have baffled men since the evolution of human creatures on this planet... we can scarcely wait for each new day to arrive so we can renew our reading...each line of the immense amount of material is absolutely BREATHE-TAKING... never in any literature has anyone seen anything comparable...and, for the first time, we understand completely the appearance of Jesus on earth...**WHY** He came and what His coming means to us in relation to our destiny which leads on beyond what we call death to glories indescribable.

**KNOW** in your inner self that all is well. Accept this on faith. Have confidence and be assured by what we tell you now - for just a little while... but let nothing trouble you deeply any more...the Laskys or the Warners...or any of these worldly things... however important they may be to us on the material plane...You would get an entirely new perspective - and you will - when the right time comes. The FUTURE holds such **GOOD** in store...with all man's floundering...and we anticipate the new era ahead, when this war period is over as one of the most interesting and worthwhile times in which to be alive.

This does not mean that we must not give attention to the things at hand and put forth our best efforts in their behalf...but we should not neglect preparation for what is to come. Your own meditations will prove more and more helpful along this line. Hold onto your hat - Martha and I have bought a farm - in the Ozarks of Arkansas (120 acres) where we intend to build a log cabin and spend part of each year - in a quiet retreat...for purposes of spiritual communion...

There is so much we would like to share with you in the way of developments because YOU would understand...but, enough for this time. If you order more hugs I'll be more careful. Much love from us all.

42-112

2310

June 5, 1942.

Friend Lark:

I knew Clara was not pleased with the final screen play as presented to her - and I, in all fairness had to concur...BUT I did not give her my criticism. I simply told her that I had made my final report and suggestions to Lasky and I hoped he would find it possible to make certain changes which I felt would improve the story a great deal. She said she would like to have seen my report and she may even ask Lasky to let her see what I have thought of the finished picture. IF she does see what I have written LASKY, she will realize at once that I have been the **ONE CHAMPION** she has had in Hollywood for the preservation of the quality and character of her father in the dramatization being made. At the risk of further possible employment I have always spoken my mind with respect to what has constituted my best and full honest judgment of story values consistent with the true concept of Twain - in dramatized form - a concept which I felt would be recognized and adored by the public. Such a concept may yet **EMERGE**...but no one who has not worked in Hollywood can begin to appreciate the creative difficulties entailed in bringing a former real life character to life on the screen - with any substantial degree of integrity. I have never presumed to be infallible...but I have made a long and conscientious study of **TWAIN**, sufficient to place me in a most authoritative position, deserving of more consideration than is shown.

IF I have been unable to accomplish more than I have in fairly close association - I am very sure that Clara's presence as advisor or consultant or dramatic assistant, etc. could only have served, with every good intention, of further confusing the issue...She would have had her feelings concerning her father **PROFANED** each day of creative work...and would have been temperamentally and emotionally worn out...to no good end. She has been saved a great deal that she knows not of...and I am hopeful that a fine picture still results. Lasky's intentions are as fine as any producer's could be; if he fails to get a great picture, it will be a mistake of the head and not the heart.

I, personally, know of NO PICTURE wherein a member of the family was hired to help on a biography EXCEPT and UNLESS they were already in the theatrical business...such as Ira Gershwin, who, I understand, has given some assistance in the preparation of the screen play on George Gershwin's life.

Ordinarily, picture companies wish to keep well-meaning relatives of biographical characters as far away from the studios as possible because they know they have to take certain poetic licenses and experience has shown that these relatives always cause trouble.

I do not see how it would have been possible for you or anyone else to have arranged for Clara to have worked on this picture. Lasky naturally wants Clara's endorsement but she is slow about giving it and suspicious of his maneuvers to gain her approval. I have reassured Lasky and also Alan Lasky, telling that I felt certain her attitude would be all right ...and they only saw her after I left Hollywood. My letter to Lasky, criticizing the screen play, indicates definitely that I am not one of his "yes men"...and if any fault is later found with the Train story and picture... it will be evident that I have stood with and for the TRAIN ESTATE.

Clara's cordial treatment of Martha and me while in Hollywood was seemingly sincere and wholehearted. We reciprocated in kind and are extremely fond of her. It is regrettable that she takes these emotional flights at times... and I presume a Hollywood lawyer has fired her with extravagant motion picture statements and figures. She is so impulsive, it is not impossible that she might go to the newspapers and denounce the picture or disclaim any part in it as she has intimated that she would do if she didn't like it. She knows Lasky fears just so a possible move and that, in such a manner, she can exert quite a hold over him. IF this last upset condition is like those of former times, it will pass away and she will be regretful. I cannot believe that she would, in her right mind and heart, wish to hurt me, either as to reputation or character. I have done my best at all times in the interest of all...

Biographical pictures made in Hollywood without the hired aid of members of a family are such films as: "The Life of Louis Pasteur"; "The Magic Bullet" (Dr. Ehrlich); Thomas Edison (Charles Edison, his son, whom I know, was visited by Spencer Tracy, to whom he gave some tips on acting the part of his father, but he was not hired to assist in the picture-making); "Abraham Lincoln"; "Lady Hamilton"; "Alexander Graham Bell"; "Stanley and Livingston"; "The House of Roschild" and many others.

Please check everything legally. All things should be in order. I have put in too much work through these years for any aggrieved person to be permitted to place it in jeopardy. I have had a recent letter from a New York producer, Eugene S. Brydon, who still hopes to do the stage version of TWAIN this fall, starring Fred Stone. If Ch'ra could ever understand what enormous work and effort has really gone into this project...and give it time to mature and materialize...she will find that the Estate will realize a great deal from it...but her causing trouble at this time is even against her own best interests.

My best to you!

Sincerely,



~~42-119~~

2310

June 8, 1942.

Dear Clara:

I, at last, have some good news for you.

FRED STONE has wired that he can start the TWAIN PLAY in summer stock at Dennis, Massachusetts, and intends to get under way for a fall engagement from there. He wants me to come on to New York and make a few more changes in the script and I am finishing up here as quickly as I can in order to co-operate with him. The show would open some time in August.

A note from Lasky is to the effect that the picture production gets under way around June 25th. I hope and trust he has greatly improved the script.

After all these years of effort and hopes deferred by circumstances seemingly beyond control, perhaps this late summer and fall are due to present a happy, profitable upturn.

Martha and I are putting in long hours of feeding daily - a most wonderful experience. We can be reached here until you receive word that we have moved on to New York.

Our love and best wishes....extended also to Nina!

Sincerely,

42-127

Clara decides to

pull

236A

June 17, 1942.

Friend Lark:

I am sending you a revised copy of letter written you under date of May 27th, which I would like you to have on file.

Clara might go direct to Lasky and show him several letters of mine which make frank comments about the screen play.

This letter to you indicates that I did not show Clara my criticism of the screen play which is the absolute truth. I did support Clara's opinion after she had given me her own reaction. I felt, in all fairness, I should do this...I have taken the Estate's side all the way through...but I have been absolutely fair and honest with Lasky as well. However, Clara, in her present confused and upset state might make it seem different.

I cannot believe that the lawyers would make any move to jeopardize the returns from the Warner deal or upset the contract - as this would not help Clara. I cannot afford to make many costly moves at present with myself or family if things are going to be tied up in litigation. If Lasky knew of brewing trouble of any sort, he might consider it politics to side with Clara as much as possible to avoid a blast from her in his direction. Until I know when I am leaving for New York it does not seem advisable to notify Lasky who knows where to reach me here. I may receive the check any day now...but if it is imperative for me to be in New York before I actually get ready to come, you let me know. Meanwhile, it may be just as well that I am not immediately available. You will know best. I am hopeful that things will still iron out happily. Certainly Clara's attitude is not reasonable nor just.

Sincerely,

2205

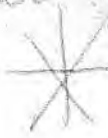
321 WEST 44TH STREET  
NEW YORK CITY

42-135

June 24th  
19 42

arrived  
after

2360



Mr. Harold M. Sherman  
c/o The Mark Twain Company  
527 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir: Re: Life of Mark Twain

Enclosed is check to your order for \$15,000.00 representing payment due July 1, 1942 pursuant to agreement dated August 11th, 1941, between Jesse L. Lasky and Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc., and pursuant to agreement dated July 10, 1941, between Mark Twain Company, Harold M. Sherman and Jesse L. Lasky, re "Life of Mark Twain."

Kindly acknowledge receipt of the enclosure to the attention of this writer.

Very truly yours,

WARNER BROS. PICTURES, INC.  
Trust Department

by W. G. Wallace  
W. G. Wallace

EGA/  
enc: ck #WNC-3254

243A  
42 ~~157~~ 157

August 3, 1942.

Dear Clara:

Martha and I, reading steadily most of this period of time since arriving in Chicago, have at last finished the amazing and voluminous material - and words absolutely fail us in attempting to describe it.

It is so much more wonderful even than we could possibly imagine when we had talks with you about it on the coast... As a consequence we are going to try to remain here as long as possible, to have access to this knowledge, for further study and research and development.

And we are wondering, in this connection, whether it might be possible for you to arrange to come here and spend a month. If so, we would try to secure permission for you to do this same reading... and then we would be free certain nights a week to discuss it with you.

Nothing in this world is so priceless... nor so spiritually reassuring. And we feel that few of our friends are so prepared to understand and appreciate this revelation as yourself.

We want you to know again how much we love you and how deeply we value your friendship.

I hear nothing direct from Mr. Lasky - and all I know of Twain production is what I read in the papers - but I sincerely hope the picture far exceeds our expectations. If you have any news I'd appreciate hearing.

Our best to you and Nina always -  
Sincerely -

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

42-166

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

*Mark Twain  
Shooting the  
movie*

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

August 15th, 1942

*244A*

Dear Harold:

Answering your letter of August 5th concerning the radio rights, these rights were assigned to Warner Bros. along with the picture rights, with the understanding that if a sponsor was secured for a Mark Twain radio program, I would appear with the program, provided it emanated from Hollywood.

I am still in a position to appear on a broadcast of this kind and, recently, had some nibbles from an important sponsor. If anything comes of it, I will let you know. The Warner Bros. would not consider waiving the radio rights at this time.

I am sorry I cannot send you the copy of your original treatment as, I believe, we only have one copy, and it is handy for reference. After the picture is completed we should be able to let you have your treatment.

Regarding the shooting script, we are making daily changes in it as the picture progresses. Many of the changes are due to the fact that the script is over-length and we are compelled to condense as we go along.

We have been shooting now for six weeks and have four more weeks to go, on a ten weeks' shooting schedule.

Those in the studio who have watched the rushes with us think the picture shows great promise, but there is still a lot of work to be done, and I can tell you more about it when it is finally assembled. There is every indication that Fredric March will be outstanding, and the makeup at the different ages in Twain's life, is very effective indeed.

I want to congratulate you on the splendid article which appeared in the Sunday Weekly Magazine on Telepathy. It is fine publicity for you and your book.

The boys join me in sending you kindest regards -

Sincerely,

**VITAPHONE**  
REGD. TRADE MARK

*Jesse L. Lasky*

42-169

244 E  
749 B

August 18, 1942.

Dear Jesse:

I am glad you are still interested in being a part of the Mark Twain radio program. I had thought from the tone of your letter to Mr. Basch, Jr., that other demands on your time prohibited such participation and that is why I wrote you as I did.

With the some hundreds of radio scripts I have written - it would be easy to build a great program on Twain, with yourself as master of ceremonies. If the sponsor becomes really interested and has an agency branch in Chicago, some sample programs could be developed. Of course, if need be, I could return to Hollywood. My only reason for wanting the original treatment was to be able to refer to it in the writing of radio programs.

I am happy that you feel the picture is progressing satisfactorily... and I hope you are getting plenty of humor in it since it seemed to me the final script I saw was a little skimpy on this - and strong on heavy drama. I have seen pictures of March made up and he looks great!

Yes, "Thoughts Through Space" has been very well received everywhere - and I am grateful since this means more serious consideration in the study of higher powers of mind. Please remember me to Bessie and give my regards to all in your office. And let me know anything that you think would be of special interest. Best to you and to Twain!  
Sincerely,

42-167

BESSIE LASKY / CIRCA MID-AUGUST 1942  
(after shooting has begun)

ONE EIGHTY-ONE NORTH SALT AIR AVENUE  
BRENTWOOD, WEST LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Dear Harold, -

Thank you for your thought  
and wishes! They mean every thing  
in this day of chaos. What a world,  
and so changing from the one we  
have lived in. Yesterday for the first  
time I had <sup>time</sup> alone under my walnut  
tree, to think and rest. A whole  
family of little birds were learning  
to hop about and to sing - It  
made me believe in the world again.  
How I wish we understood the life  
of Nature better - They all seem so  
happy and free without the slightest  
limitations -

Your accounts were eagerly read  
and what a rich feast of knowledge  
you are able to pour into your  
souls. Truly such a concentration

bring tremendous power. What work  
has been evolving what truths  
is pounded! Humans are more hungry  
for their destiny than for food -  
I should so like to be their to  
share the daily work. Also keep me  
informed of it's progress and as  
much as you are permitted to  
give out.

Mark Twain is starting in a  
true form for success. Freddie  
March is a fine choice. Jesse while  
he is fearful of the curtailment of  
production and war limitations  
seems easy about the story. I  
believe it will be all we hoped  
for. Keep your strong thoughts on  
at Harold and send Jesse your  
positive thoughts. He is so eager  
for it's being a tribute to one  
of our most representative Americans.  
If sincerity means any thing I  
feel Jesse is pledged to Mark Twain



soul. Of course he knows in his heart  
you have given your utmost.  
My book is coming to a point  
where I am concerned about it's  
being published - I wrote Ellen but  
she does not want to touch color  
and it has 16 illustrations in  
color to be printed with text and  
color chart interpretation. Do you by  
chance know of any publisher who  
might be interested? The themes  
are qualities of the soul. I have  
tried to paint the spirit, showing  
the truths within man. The Key to  
colors are very instructive and I  
find very few people able to feel  
the vibrations from color. It is  
a step ahead in Art and oh!  
so hard to project anything of  
beauty and health - The individual  
wants it but try and place it  
on the book shelves. I am sure  
it will raise the consciousness  
over

of women. I have been trained  
and helped for its Themes and  
color, content. Jesse is very taken  
with it and expresses such an  
interest and wants me to show  
the paintings to every one but  
I do not care to until it is  
published - I am sure it is a  
very tiny part of your present  
preoccupation, as it is a new  
age contribution - and the first  
time theme, words, color, form, are  
linked and that Russian  
composer who you met is going  
to compose a composition for  
each subject - He is so taken with  
it I sent him text and color  
to work on for his music.

I shall be glad to ship the  
paintings to any one interested.

Let me hear of your plans and  
do accept all good wishes for  
both  
Sincerely  
Bessie Lasky

42-179

August 20th, 1948.

Mr. Jervis Langdon  
 Elms  
 New York,

Dear Jervis:

Referring to your inquiry as to just what Mr. Pierce said when he called here to see me and Mr. Constock on Tuesday, August 18th, I beg to state that he dealt mostly in generalities as he said he thought he had better tell us rather than write what he had to say. He then continued that their client was still highly dissatisfied with this other arrangement and took the position that the trustees had no right to make the contract with Sherman in 1936 whereby I was permitted to work with Sherman, etc., and said that that was a breach of trust. He said that the reason why she declined to sign the annual account as usual was that there were some Lasky payments mixed up in it and therefore she could not be consistent and approve the whole account when it had the disputed Lasky payments in it. He said she insisted that new arrangements be made whereby Sherman and I should pay her more money out of this Lasky contract, as they considered \$15,000. wholly inadequate, and he added that after deducting the Harper and Paine participation, the Mark Twain Company, of course, did not receive the whole \$15,000. This showed a little sloppy thinking on his part as the Paine \$1,000 was paid by Sherman, and was in no way deducted from the \$15,000. I told him that she would probably have been better pleased if, instead of Harper's getting the 20% of the total payment, they had received 50% as would have been the case if I had not changed the contract years ago, which gave their client an additional 30%.

I tried to pin him down on several questions as to what he thought of things, and he said he would rather not commit himself, and he also said that he was sorry but unless we made the settlement they wanted they would have to bring a proceeding to surcharge the trustees' accounts, as they hold that this Sherman contract should never have been made and that it was the root of the whole evil.

I called his attention to the fact that at the time Sherman came to me about getting the rights I told him at once that the biography which he was after was under copyright, which was Mr. Paine's property pursuant to a contract which Mr. Paine made with Mark Twain. This was before I ever knew either one of them.

I further called his attention to the fact that at the time of the Sherman contract I was not a trustee and had no idea of becoming a trustee, and that the trustees dealt with Sherman in-

Mr. Jarvis Langdon

-2-

August 20th, 1942.

dividually, and dealt with me as attorney for the estate in giving permission in that instance to do some work for Sherman and be paid for it by him instead of by the estate, as I was not to receive anything from the estate in connection with whatever might come out of the Sherman contract. I told him, therefore, that in finally consummating the contract with Lasky I was really consummating and carrying out a bargain which the two trustees had made a number of years before. However, that was like water off a duck's back.

They also said they wanted my resignation as trustee and also payment of extra monies to Clara from this Lasky contract. I told them that as long as they made charges of any kind, I was certainly not retiring under fire, that I would talk over the matter with you and advise them later on. He tried to pin me down to a week and I said "no", that I had not had a vacation as yet and might get away and could not fix a definite time.

Please do not send this new account to Clara at all nor say anything to her about it, as what I suggested to you over the telephone was that we file our own account and with it a petition asking that she be cited to appear and show cause why the same should not be approved. This will then place the jurisdiction on this question in the probate court of Redding, where it belongs. I also plan that the petition in relation to it shall - although it will probably be drawn by me in the main, have the firm name of Cummings and Lockwood of Stamford, Connecticut, who are, perhaps, the leading attorneys in the State and friends of mine, and these were the same attorneys who, with me, probated Mr. Clemens' Will in 1910; so that obviously they are the persons to be in charge of this proceeding.

Also, do not say a word to her about our plans to file this account and proceeding in Probate Court in Redding, as this would tip our plans to these other fellows, and there is no use doing this. We are thereby taking it to the correct Court whereas these local fellows may be publicity mongers and start some action in New York. I do not want them to know (they are her attorneys) regarding this account because I shall file with the account the Sherman contract to which they object, and specifically ask the Court to approve it and also perhaps to take the same procedure as to the Lasky account, and if the Court approves that, and I am sure it will, as I have every reason to believe it will, then Clara is simply out in the cold by the decision of the Court. All of the foregoing is proper Connecticut probate procedure, - the Court where the Will was probated and which has jurisdiction of all matters relating to the Trust created under the said Will, and which has approved all of the accounts.

I am still under the same opinion which I suggested to you a month or so ago, that the easy and correct solution of this would be readily attained by your going to Clara (of course, at the expense of the estate) and see her, as you are the only one she will listen to.

Mr. Jervis Langdon

August 20th, 1942.

-3-

Always, she is in the hands of the Philistines! - and she is going further and further the wrong way.

I should very much regret getting into a personal Court squabble with Mark Twain's daughter, as it would not benefit her reputation and would therefore be harmful to the estate, and even winning the same would be no personal pleasure as she does not know what she is doing, having gone off half-cocked as she has on many other occasions heretofore in connection with other estate matters, and in all of which she has been proven wrong from time to time, and that has galled her so that she wants now to gain her own ends in which to be able to say that for once she was right. Winning a battle of that kind would be no pleasure to me whatsoever, but instead a matter of regret.

In my opinion, you are the sole and only solution to it. And of course, neither you nor I can afford to be attacked and meekly lie down under fire. Another result which I foresee will be that Sherman will probably crack a nice suit on her personally so she is starting on a project which somebody else is going to finish, and it is therefore up to us to stop it if we can. - "Thou art the man!"

With best regards, I am

Yours faithfully,

(Charles T. Lark).

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

244e  
42-178

August 28th, 1942.

Mr. Harold Sherman,  
The Cambridge Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I tried to get you on the phone last night, and failing to do so, am writing you enclosing herewith a copy of a letter which I wrote to Jervis last week, which explains the situation.

Yesterday I went up to Stamford, Connecticut, filed our Annual Account of Proceedings, which Clara declined to approve, although she has approved them for more than thirty years, and also filed the petition asking the Court to set an early date for hearing and cite her to show cause why she should not approve the same, also made a similar request as to your agreement with the Mark Twain Company and the two Lasky contracts of July 10th, 1941, one referring to production and one to payment items. She has likewise decided to show why this should not be approved and ratified by the Court, but this will completely cramp her move. The Court took the papers, entered the order as a citation and sent the same by registered mail last evening, the Court having taken jurisdiction in the matter and having issued process thereon.

I have gotten Clara's attorneys fixed so that any suits filed here against Jervis and me can be enjoined and specifically dismissed, as the Connecticut Court has taken jurisdiction and will retain it. In other words, I got the "jump" on the California and New York attorneys and they are now on the defensive, although they don't know that as yet.

Jervis wrote Clara a very stiff letter yesterday in which he told her that he was absolutely with me, would defend the matter with me, and that if I retired as Trustee, he would also retire from all of her affairs. He advised her to get hold of some advisor with common sense aside from the group surrounding her who were using her in hope of financial betterment. It was a good stiff letter and may bring fruit.

Yours faithfully,

*Charles T. Lark*

(Charles T. Lark).

Encl.

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

241E  
42-198

September 15th, 1942.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Sherman:-

We are still at logger-heads with Clara. We filed our account in Connecticut and also filed with it copy of the first contract you made with the Trustees and the Mark Twain Company, copy of the two Lasky contracts, and asked the court to issue a citation, which was issued and signed on August 27th, directing Clara to appear today, September 15th, but her New York attorneys asked for an extension of time, and the same was granted to September 29th. However, I have hearings on here for the 28th, 29th and 30th, so the matter will go over until the 2nd or 4th of October, but I do not know how just what date will be finally fixed.

Of course, I will have to have you in Connecticut at the time of the hearing, and wish you would scratch your heat and see whether you do not recalling discussing this contract with Clara, and that she knew perfectly well the consideration was \$50,000., of which the Mark Twain Company was to get \$15,000., as you recall she claims recently she did not know what it was or that I had any participation with you in the matter, although your contract with the Mark Twain Company stipulated that I should be permitted to work with and for you as much as was desired, and the \$15,000. was the price fixed by Mr. Loomis, and therefore, there was nothing further to be done as far as the estate was concerned. However, you will also recall that I dug up a couple of letters which she wrote me stating that she was glad to learn from Mr. Lasky that I was cooperating with you and that the one who could naturally help you would be me and that I would be paid for my services, which I have in black and white from her, which is in rather contrast to her late statements that she did not have any idea of any participation.

I think the woman is senile, and maybe she has changed her medium out there or the seerees she has been using of late, or is she still working with the ouija board. I wish you could find out about this.

I find that in the last thirty-two years she had had over a million dollars income from the estate, and of this I figure over one-half of it came directly through my work. She now says she has lost all confidence in me because the Mark Twain Company's participation of \$15,000. was inadequate. She apparent-

Mr. Harold M. Sherman - # 2

September 15th, 1942.

ly has not gotten it through her head yet that Paine owned the copyright to the Autobiography and not the estate at the time the contract was made. In other words, she is so hard up for funds to maintain that ghetto of hers, she will do anything to get money. However, perhaps the kindest thing to think is that she has gone a little further off in the head than heretofore as apparently the stuff she is pulling now is tops for ingratitude and appreciation.

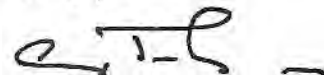
Jervis Langdon is standing by me and told her that if I resign he would retire at the time, and would have nothing further to do with her matters. He has been playing the game in good shape and of course, is telling the truth. I rather suspect that that secretary of hers is back of it, and probably had her engage that Jewish lawyer, who in turn have engaged New York lawyers, and they in turn have engaged Connecticut attorneys.

You see I stole a march by filing the account and having citation issued to her, as this put them on the defense. Furthermore, it blocks them from bringing suit here in New York as the Connecticut courts, from which the estate emanated, already has taken jurisdiction of the matter and issued process. In other words, I got the jump on them. However, it is all very discussing and rather takes every bit of your confidence in the stability of human nature.

Put on your thinking cap now about this \$50,000. item as I am sure in your talks with Clara you discussed this although she pretends she knew nothing about what Lasky was to pay, and she apparently got it in her head that if the amount was \$50,000., as usual she was to get the bulk of it, entirely forgetting your contract and forgetting your many years of work in the premises.

With best regards, I am,

Yours faithfully,



(Charles T. Lark)



245A  
42-200

September 16, 1942.

Mr. Charles T. Lark,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Lark:

I am sorry you are having so much trouble with Clara. We saw her, Martha and I, many times while in Hollywood, on purely friendly, social occasions and enjoyed her company very much. She was always gracious to us and, while we realized that she was emotionally distraught over world conditions and her own problems with the refugees she had sponsored, we did not discuss the business of "Mark Twain". The nearest we came to this was one time when she said there were so many demands being made upon her, she had so many uses for her money, that she hoped we made a lot out of the picture, and I said, "If it is a success, there should be a substantial amount, from the percentage on the grosses." Then I pointed out that 10 percent on the first million after two million had been taken in, would total \$100,000.00 and that it was on a rising scale thereafter. I mentioned, "Gone With the Wind" as having grossed so many million, I think it was 18 million at the time, and said, "Of course, no one can predict in advance what any picture is apt to gross" and Clara laughed and said, "Well, I hope the fates are kind to Mark Twain," or a comment very similar. I did not discuss the details of the contract with her. It just did not come up in the conversation, but I have always taken for granted she knew and approved of receiving the \$15,000.00 as per arrangement on my original contract.

Mr. Lark, I feel that the \$35,000.00 I will have received for my share is entirely fair in consideration of the tremendous amount of work I have put in which has been used as the backlog material for the picture story. This is NOT exorbitant or out of line with picture prices. Many writers have received much more than this for an original story, without any "real life" connection. I did make arrangements with Albert Bigelow Paine, to use his copyrighted material, and my holding to this contract through the years, as well as the contract with the Mark Twain Company, through the kind and understanding co-operation of the trustees, placed Clara in position to get this deal when the opportunity came. I co-operated with you, acting for the Estate, in your purchasing all rights to Paine's copyrights, from his heirs, and paid you the \$1,000.00 I had agreed to pay Paine when a deal was made. I GAVE UP my rights to have a Broadway stage play produced and, last spring, could positively have had a Broadway production, with Fred Stone as the star, had the picture rights NOT been sold. I have correspondence indicating this...and recent wires from Stone...all negotiations being killed by only one thing - picture rights have been sold.

You know how long I held out for a Broadway production, feeling that the Mark Twain Company and I could realize a bigger money return from this method of procedure, but when you said to me that Clara was growing impatient, that she was anxious for a deal to be made with Mr. Lasky, if possible...I agreed to talk with him and see what could be done.

I knew very well that the chances to dispose of the radio rights might also be jeopardized by a picture sale, so that we would be sacrificing two possible good money-making markets by selling first to pictures...but I did what I thought was best under existing circumstances and feeling that this was Clara's wish also.

I felt that I should not be penalized any more for giving up these possible markets, and that the terms of the original contract should be honored, namely, \$15,000 to the Mark Twain Company for the right to use the Mark Twain material which I had put into play form and which Mr. Lasky was interested in buying, along with the right to use the material pertaining to Twain's life. The percentage arrangement which was worked out, in addition to the cash payment of \$50,000.00 also guaranteed to the Mark Twain Company an additional income for the rights granted, on which material I had done all the work!

I have been glad to avail myself of your services throughout the years because of your authoritative knowledge of Twain - your judgment and your suggestions have saved me a vast amount of time and research, and I think the trustees were wise in permitting you to work with me, since it has enabled a finer development of the life story and has kept you thoroughly acquainted with my complete efforts on behalf of this project.

I have fought for the right presentation of this story, as my letters to Clara will show, some of which were caustic with respect to Mr. Lasky's ideas, from time to time. I have taken the Twain Company's side, or what I have felt would be the point of view of trustees and Clara, on different phases of the story, as I have felt my responsibility on this score to be keen. What we may see in the final screen version I cannot predict, but a criticism I submitted to Mr. Lasky before I left, will evidence that I pulled no punches in my desire to defend the very best in Twain, which interest has been far beyond the commercial.

I repeat, I have not been paid out of proportion though Clara, on the surface and without having made proper evaluation, may think so. Lasky himself has told me that all the major studios considered Twain and none of them saw how they could make a successful picture story out of his life... and yet, from the material I worked out, the present picture is being made. Clara owes a great deal to me and to you for our joint efforts in this behalf...and I made genuine economic sacrifices through the years in the time and creative effort expended in the interest of the Twain play and material. Best to you!

42-201  
245B

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

*Letter explaining  
why court case  
was necessary*

September 16th, 1942.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Sherman:-

Jervis Langdon just phoned me that several days ago Mr. Pierce, of Nims, Verdi & Martin, phoned him and said he would like to have a get-to-gether with him, and he phoned Jervis again today and said that Clara would drop everything if you and I would pay her \$14,000. I told him that as far as I was concerned I was not going to pay her 5¢ as I wanted the court to settle whether or not I was wrong or otherwise. He also told Jervis that she did not want him to retire but Jervis told Pierce that every dollar which the estate had made with the exception of a very small income from securities was made by me for the estate, and he would not for a minute attempt to handle the estate without me at his side.

You may judge of the character of the attorneys with whom we are dealing both here and in Los Angeles by the fact of Pierce phoning Jervis Langdon behind my back. Cummings & Lockwood started the proceedings and are the attorneys, and, therefore, before phoning Jervis to be at all ethical he should have phoned Cummings & Lockwood and got their permission to phone Jervis, but you see nothing of that kind was done so that a stiff answer was due and delivered.

Furthermore, I also called the attention of Jervis Langdon to the fact that the estate had stipulated \$15,000. as its remuneration in full; however, we got Lasky to stick in that clause of percentages after the gross had totaled \$2,000,000. and I suggested to you and you promptly agreed and signed the contract whereby out of whatever excess moneys, if any we are paid, we should pay the Mark Twain Company one-third, although this was not necessary to have done as \$15,000. had been stipulated as their payment in full. It seems that Pierce told Jervis today that whatever I might have made for the estate in the past I had now made a "bad slip". I suppose, nevertheless, agreeing to pay the Mark Twain Company one-third of any excess moneys which came

Mr. Harold M. Sherman - # 2

September 16th, 1942.

in after the \$2,000,000. gross had been reached was "another slip" on my part. In other words, it was slipping the estate some money to which it was not legally entitled if there proved to be an excess. This thing is so obviously unfair that it makes me sick, and I want to get sister Clara in court and show her up for what she really is, an ingrate of the first waters.

Yours faithfully,

*Charles T. Lark*

(Charles T. Lark)

42-202

Howard Kyle matter

2450

September 16, 1942.

Friend Lark:

I think Howard Kyle should be settled, through Mr. Berman. He is a vicious old man who would offer himself as a witness to Clara if he knew about this and would accuse you of taking half what came to me - an assumption he once threw at me - and would paint a sad picture of how wrongly he has been treated, etc.

My own funds are pretty low at present. I have been working here on a dramatization of the life of Jane Addams, investing much time on this work as I originally did on Twain, in order to develop it into a valuable piece of property. As it now stands, it cannot be sold...and Twain's life wasn't and couldn't be sold, either, until we had done this basic work on the material and put it in dramatic form.

I have no money I could pay Kyle now, but if you can make a settlement and get his signed acceptance, I will owe you my share. I feel this must be done as his own aggrieved attitude is damaging.

Human nature, wherever money is concerned, has gone berserk today. Everywhere you turn, you find friendships being lost over money. To think you have to work so many years to get a good result - and then have your efforts and the compensation you should rightfully receive and have earned - challenged!

I sincerely hope this all turns out as it should. Please keep me advised.

Sincerely,

42-203

245c

September 17, 1942.

Friend Lark:

I'm glad your fighting spirit is up!

It now becomes apparant that Clara simply wants more money to meet certain needs or to hand out to her refugee friends...and she has figured out the amount and is asking for it, without any regard for the merit of the case at all. She is even willing to try to break a contract, made in good faith, and slander the reputations of Jervis Langdon, yourself and myself by impugning our honesty and fairness.

I am no judge of legal matters but I should think this move on Clara's part and also on the part of her lawyers, wouldn't help her at all.

She may, when she learns of the firm stand you have taken, decide to withdraw her stand at the last moment. And then, think of the legal fees she will have to pay.

I suppose a hearing is different than a trial. Is there any way that I can get redress for the expenses of having to come to New York to answer her charges?

I have bought myself a farm, not an expensive buy, but have assumed certain obligations because of my expectations with respect to a contract which I have considered to be binding. If Clara persists in this attitude, and attempts to tie up this money, can I sue her for the position she will have put me in with respect to my own affairs?

Please keep me informed.  
Sincerely,

42-208

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, Inc.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

2477

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

September 24th, 1942

Dear Harold:

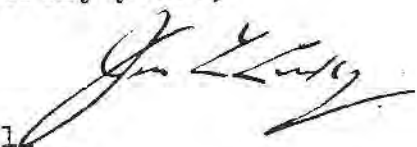
We finally finished shooting "Mark Twain" last night. Fredric March's performance, from beginning to end, is definitely of Academy Award calibre; he is nothing less than magnificent in his portrayal. All the other parts are played splendidly and Alexis Smith will be a revelation to picture audiences.

We have given the story an elaborate production and you will be happy to know that those who have seen the first rough assembly of the picture, without the montages which are not yet ready, have praised the picture highly and forecast a great popular success.

If you are in Chicago the early part of December when the first print will probably be shipped to that section, I will arrange for you and your folks to have a private showing in the Warner Bros. projection room. Unfortunately, our picture cannot be made ready in time for Mark Twain's birthday anniversary, November 30th, much as we looked forward to having it ready on that date.

I hope things are going well with you. With kindest regards in which Julius joins me -

Sincerely yours,



Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill.

**VITAPHONE**  
DUO TRADE MARK

Mark Twain

42-209

2456

September 24, 1942.

Dear Mr. Lark:

Did you try to phone me last Sunday night? I had word when I came that there had been a New York call but the party did not leave their name.

This morning I received the WRITING CREDIT for "The Adventures of Mark Twain" which I listed as follows:

ORIGINAL SCREEN PLAY BY ALAN LEMAY  
ADDITIONAL DIALOGUE BY HAROLD M. SHERMAN  
& HARRY CHANDLER

All biographical material obtained from the Mark Twain Estate and from the play, "MARK TWAIN" by Harold M. Sherman.

I am protesting this "tentative credit statement which is to appear on the picture because I believe I should be given "second credit" behind Alan LeMay for original screen play.

BUT, EVEN SO, note the credit they feel I deserve, which should clearly indicate in any court of law HOW MUCH I have contributed to the making of the picture...and since I prepared ALL the chronological material and devised the original outline in play form from which the picture is now made...it is evident how valuable my services have been to the whole.. and yours, too!

What are the developments? Let's hear from you. Best wishes!

Sincerely,



42-210

September 24, 1942.

Dear Howard: [Koch]

I have meant to drop you a line since leaving Hollywood but have been immensely busy here in Chicago where I am dramatizing the life of Jane Addams of Hull House.

I see now, by a notice I have received of "tentative writing credits", that you are supposed to be in Kingston, N.Y. and ~~it is~~ my hope that all is well with you and yours.

No doubt you have received the same notice. Because you recognize the importance of credits and because this is my first opportunity to get such credit listing where it really counts, I am asking you for advice.

I feel that I should be listed in second position behind Alan LeMay on the Original Screen Play, since it has been based largely on our original screen treatment. LeMay is a nice person but extremely difficult to work with creatively, since he must have the bit in his own teeth...I am sure you understand this...but I have contributed much more, through adapting myself to his style of working, than may show on the surface.

I have not seen the final script and God only knows whether it will turn out as well as we all have hoped and prayed it would. I have wired for a look at the script. I am presuming that the work you have done does not appear at all or that of Anne Froelich or Forman. I do not know what has been used of Chandler's... but if you can advise me, fairly, without my quoting you, I would deeply appreciate it.

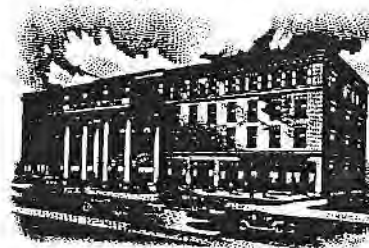
If you come through Chicago SEE US!

42-212

"STOP AT RECOGNIZED HOTELS"



The Governor Clinton  
Kingston, N. Y.



September 27, 1942

Dear Harold:

As I never read the final script of Mark Twain, I feel a little at a loss to advise you in regard to your credit. However, I'll make my best guess about it, for what it's worth.

I think you did the right thing in wiring for the script. I would also serve notice on them, if you haven't done so already, that you wish to hold your decision in regard to the credits in abeyance until you've had a chance to read the script and assess your contributions. If you then find that in the structure of the story, or in the writing of the scenes, that you have made some substantial contribution, then I would insist upon second credit with LeMay on the original screen story, instead of the mere mention of additional dialogue. At the same time, be sure not to sacrifice the reference to your original play as it now stands in the credits.

Since Lasky will no doubt ballyhoo the picture in his usual style, the credits are likely to have some value to a writer even if the picture flops. Therefore, I would make a point of using it to the utmost advantage that you can.

As far as I'm concerned, I have so little faith in what's coming out of that stew that I don't want to be connected with it in any way, regardless of whether or not they have retained anything from my "Theatre Guild script" as Mr. Lasky so generously described it. Anne Froelich and Forman feel the same way as I. My only wish about it is that the picture proves useful to you as a means of further connections in Hollywood.

My trip East was occasioned by the illness of my mother and various other personal matters. However, I had to take my assignment along, which is the screen play of Mr. Davies' "Mission to Moscow". Apparently next week

"STOP AT RECOGNIZED HOTELS"



The Governor Clinton  
Kingston, N. Y.



-2-

is as far as I can stretch my absence from Warner Brothers.

My best to Martha, Mary and to that future "rough rider".

As ever,

*Howard*

ag

P.S. I hope you will  
come back to  
Hollywood.  
H.

42-213

247A

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

September 28th, 1942.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Sherman:-

I unsuccessfully tried to telephone you again last night as I was sure you would want to talk to me about the item you mentioned in your letter to me of September 24th. You stated therein that the "Writing Credit" for the play as you listed is as follows:

"ORIGINAL SCREEN PLAY BY ALAN LEMAY,  
ADDITIONAL DIALOGUE BY HAROLD M. SHERMAN  
& HARRY CHANDLER

All biographical material obtained from  
the Mark Twain Estate and from the play,  
"MARY TWAIN" by Harold M. Sherman".

Instead of the part which is not capitalized, I wish you would substitute the following and strike out what you have:

"Based on biographical material, ~~and~~ works owned or  
controlled by the Mark Twain Company, and the play,  
"MARK TWAIN" by Harold M. Sherman".

As bearing on our controversy with Clara, it is important that the wording be as I corrected it as above instead of stating biographical material etc. obtained from the estate, which is not correct.

They have gotten an adjournment until October 15th, and I do not know whether they will be foolish enough to go ahead. I will know three or four days in advance when the hearing will be held in Redding, and of course, I will have to have you here, so I will advise you early in the week beginning October 12th.

With best regards, I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Charles T. Lark)

2476

42-215

**CLASS OF SERVICE**  
 This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

# WESTERN UNION

(129)

SYMBOLS	
DL	= Day Letter
NT	= Overnight Telegram
LC	= Deferred Cable
NLT	= Cable Night Letter
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SA 471 26-HOLLYWOOD CALIF 29 1226P

HAROLD SHERMAN, CAMBRIDGE HOTEL=

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY CHGO=

1942 SEP 29 PM 3 30  
 Duplicate of Telephoned Telegram

RE MARK TWAIN GUILD POLICY IS TO ARBITRATE CREDITS FOR  
 ABSENTEE MEMBERS. SUGGEST YOU WERE EMPOWERING US TO  
 ARBITRATE DETERMINATION OF CREDITS IN VIEW YOUR ABSENCE=  
 SCREEN WRITERS GUILD.

LAK 6401  
 BK 3578 mld

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

42-218



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

September 30, 1942.

Dear Howard: [KOCH]

It was fine of you to write me as you have. As I told you, I am not expecting too much, but since picture credits mean what they do - I felt I should have whatever credit was due me for whatever it might be worth. No doubt if I were in your position, with the credit list you have, my feeling would be different.

I had to empower the Screen Writers' Guild to arbitrate for me, being absent from the scene...but I do not see how anyone can fairly judge without a writer's OWN EVALUATION. Why I should be denied a reading of the final script, simply because I am out of town, is incomprehensible.

I have, however, written a detailed letter, specifying the scenes, etc. that I know I have been responsible for...so they can check on these claims against my original treatments. And now I am sitting back, waiting to see how fair Hollywood can be to a new writer.

I know that Lasky does not have a very high opinion of me as a writer, inasmuch as he referred to me as a "research man", which should balance his reference to your script as "Theatre Guild"...but I was never given a fair chance to show what I could do for LeMay couldn't work with anyone and had to be given the ball or he wouldn't "play at all".

I felt that illness might have been one of the reasons for your trip and hope your mother much better now. Thank you again for your good letter and if you have any time between trains in Chicago, when you return, let me know. Martha, Mary and the "rough rider" send their best!



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

42-220

2488

October 1, 1942.

Dear Jesse:

Can you possibly imagine the warm and heartening glow your fine letter brought to me? My good wishes have gone out to you and Julius and all concerned through all these weeks of production - in the hope you would be able to report to me what you now have - that a great picture has resulted in "The Adventures of Mark Twain"!

You know that I have been frank and to-the-point in my criticisms and suggestions with respect to different phases of the story but only with the best interests of the picture in mind. I have not claimed to be right in every particular but felt you should balance my judgment against your own that every possible value might be checked, which I feel you have conscientiously endeavored to do.

While it was difficult to unburden myself in the initial preparatory stages of the enormous wealth of material at our disposal, still this creative spade work served as a great reservoir on which to draw in the Original Screen Treatment with Alan LeMay and later the Final Script.

In the friendliest spirit, I am now, as you perhaps know from Mr. Obringer, protesting the credits as given me. If he will let you see, has he not done so, a letter I have written him, you will see the points I have raised substantiating my claim to second place credit behind Alan on the Original Screen Play.

It was a great pleasure working with you and I hope we may be associated again on another project equally inspiring.

You may be interested to know that I have finished a stage play on the life of JANE ADDAMS OF HULL HOUSE. It is a big production and the Hull House people have not yet "okayed" it because they consider it "too dramatic". I am tremendously impressed with the picture possibilities, and because the play would be so costly to do, I am wondering whether if, in these times, I shouldn't do with it what was done with Twain.

Would you like to have me send on the script for you and Bessie to read and consider? I am sure - if you like it - we can both go to the Hull House Estate and "sell them" that this story should be done. It carries the greatest American theme for these times that I know!

How is your Boy Scout material progressing? I should have enjoyed a chance to work on this because of my long association with the Boy Scouts and the hundreds of stories I have written for their Boys Life Magazine. I thin, because of this background, I understand the spirit of the Scouts as few writers do.

If it is true that you are to do the life of Winston Churchill, that is immensely exciting!



-3-

Thanks for your graciousness in offering a private showing of the Twain picture to us in Chicago early in December. We intend to be here and would love to see it, of course!

Can you give me any idea of the approximate time when you plan its release?

My warmest good wishes to Bessie Lasky and yourself, in which Mrs. Sherman joins.

Sincerely,

42-223

248C

October 3, 1942.

Miss Ann Roth,  
Screen Writers' Guild,  
1655 North Cherokee Ave.,  
Hollywood, California.

Dear Miss Roth:

I deeply appreciate your airmailing a copy of the FINAL SCRIPT which has taken me all this day, Saturday, to go through.

I am POSITIVE now that I merit second credit behind Alan LeMay on the ORIGINAL SCREEN PLAY but I would like to say, also, that he has done a MAGNIFICENT JOB with his end of the work, which was naturally greater than mine because of the very nature of our arranged collaboration.

I hope in my markings of the script that I have made it easier for any judges to refer to different material of mine as EVIDENCE that my claims are true and valid. It may be that my deservability will be so demonstrated on some of the bigger contributions that it will not be necessary to go into so much detail on many of the more minor creative points.

In referring to sequences and scenes of a major nature which I have originated myself, or conceived in collaboration with LeMay, I have not indicated any specific lines of dialogue. Some of the dialogue is mine, either in whole or in part but, as explained in a previous letter, LeMay did the actual dictating after our discussions, and while the scenes often followed the pattern set up by me or by us together, the dialogue took the form he gave it. I looked upon this as a joint creative effort and would have so regarded it if conditions had been reversed and I had done the dictating.

That I was wise in giving "LeMay his head", because of his greater picture writing experience and his creative habit of writing which caused him to insist on this form of collaboration, is shown by the RESULTS. Unless my writing judgment is unsound, I am prepared to say, after a careful study of the shooting script, that a GREAT PICTURE should be forthcoming.

You will see not only the contributions I made directly, but that many of my criticisms and suggestions also served to bring about changes which greatly improved the story, continuity, character and quality of the screen play.

MY OWN ORIGINAL MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS  
TO THE SHOOTING SCRIPT, "THE  
ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN":

1. Idea, plot outline and some of dialogue for Entire Opening Sequence of Halley's Comet and birth of "Samuel Langhorne Clemens". (This tied in to final scenes of picture relating to death of Twain and re-appearance of Halley's comet.) See Pages 1-3, Final Script.
2. Idea for FULL SCREEN FACE of MATURE MARK TWAIN, accepted likeness of him, following Main Title of picture, in which scene he speaks direct to audience. This not only my idea but largely my arrangement of Twain's dialogue, as well as my idea for his introducing the audience, by his humorous, human comment, to the opening scenes of his own boyhood. (Pages 3 to top of 6, inclusive.)
3. Sam's meeting, while pilot on his river boat, of the westerner, Steve Gillis, who interests him in mining. This is an important plot contribution since it enables a "setting of the stage" for Sam's later leaving the river and going west. (Page - Substitute 29-A)
4. Pilot Sam Clemens' meeting of Jervis Langdon, also on his river boat, rather than later as occurred in actual life, so that romantic interest could develop and motivate Sam's movements and aspirations from then on. (Page 33)
5. The scene wherein Sam uses a fishpole to hook the miniature picture of Olivia from Langdon's stateroom. His possession of this picture as he leaves the river and goes west enables further uses of it to keep his romantic interest in Olivia alive with the audience until his real meeting with the girl he has sworn to marry, which takes place some time later. (Page 47)
6. The scene, while a small one, should be humorously effective - that of the mule whose ears "snap back" with Sam's burst of profanity and who trots off down the trail after having balked. (Page 51)
7. Sam's fall down the mine shaft and his frantically digging in the rubbish to unearth Olivia's miniature, focusing attention once more on his continuing interest in her and the fact he is trying to get rich for her sake. (P-54)
8. FROG SEQUENCE... It was my original idea to place Sam Clemens ~~as~~ an actual character in his own story, "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County". It is doubtful if this entire sequence would have been thought of as a part of Mark Twain's life or adventures had it not been for this basic idea of mine, later expanded and improved in situation and dialogue in collaboration with Alan LeMay.

9. The JUMPING FROG MONTAGE...As a means of accomplishing a transition in time and events and getting Sam from the west to the east with his new name "Mark Twain" established and Mark about to lecture at Cooper Union in New York City. It was my idea to have the frog jumping from newspaper to newspaper through the changing scenes, as the "Jumping Frog" story gained wider and wider publication. This idea was then elaborated upon in collaboration with LeMay who brought in the civil war developments. (Pages 92 to 94 inclusive)
10. The TOY STEAMBOAT and its uses in the scenes on pages 119 to 124 inclusive. It will be seen that, without this device and the way it is employed, much of the powerful emotional punch would be missing from the scenes.
11. The Whittier Dinner Sequence conceived by me originally, fully suggested in my Idea Chart, Pages 5,6 which is a part of my Chronology. An outline of these scenes was written by me during my collaboration with LeMay on the screen treatment, but he rejected it at the time as having no place in the story, and I destroyed my work. However, when LeMay returned some months later to write the screen play, and I was rehired for several weeks to work with him, he gave me credit for "being on the right track" about the Whittier dinner episode, and said he was using it. My idea even as sketched in the Idea Chart, ready for writing, suggested the unhappy newspaper publicity which LeMay has so well built upon to bring the news home to Livy, and her encouragement of him. (Pages 133-144 inclusive)
12. The NATIONAL PROGRESS MONTAGE. When confronted with the problem of accomplishing a transition in time, showing scientific progress synchronized with Mark Twain's economic and writing struggles, I described to LeMay a "March of Progress" MONTAGE, I had created and used in my Original Screen Play, "ARE WE CIVILIZED?" starring William Farnum and Anita Louise, produced by an independent company, Raspin Productions, 1934. (You will find I am credited with Original Story, Continuity and Dialogue on this production) I have described the nature of this MONTAGE on Pages 149 and 150 of this Final Script. Reference was also made to it in my Idea Chart, Pages 15 and 25. The finale of the MONTAGE developed by LeMay where Paige is making more and more money demands upon Twain, is contained in my Rough Draft Treatment, bottom of page 75, top of 76.
13. The idea of the GLOBE OF THE WORLD as a device for dramatically illustrating the round-the-world speaking tour Mark Twain was to undertake, and the scene with Pond, lecture bureau manager, and his financial advisor, Col. Rogers, concerning this tour, including some of my own dialogue. (Pages 171-174-A)
14. LeMay's idea to center the emotional interest upon Livy, her illness and death, rather than the daughter Susy's illness and death, as done in my stage play. This enabled

a transfer of a number of the vital scenes and situations in my stage play from Susy to Livy without essentially changing their nature or feeling except as the scenes now applied to Livy, Mark's wife. This was especially true of the farewell scene when Mark left Susy, who was ill, at home, while he went on his speaking tour, with the expectation that she would join him later abroad. NOW, in this Final Script, the same elements in the scene are used with the Clemens' family bidding Mark goodbye, ONLY Livy is ill and staying home with the girls, and bravely concealing her illness from Mark, as Susy had done in my stage play. The locale has been changed from the Twain home to the pier, the only essential difference. (Pages B-C and D, 174)

15. THE WORLD TOUR MONTAGE Suggested by me in my Idea Chart, as a part of Chronology script, back section, Page 16, wherein excerpts from Twain's humorous sayings are to be used, as fragments of his lectures are given. (Page 175 and Appendix A, pages 192 to 195 inclusive in Final Script)

16. THE SEQUENCE WITH LIVY - Her illness, her scene with Mark about the Oxford award, her exacting a promise from him to go on to Oxford without her and claim the honor due him, her death scene. This is ALL essentially my idea, contained in all my written material, simply re-written here, with the presence of Pond added in several of the scenes. (Pages 177 to 183 inclusive)

17. Use of the beautifully phrased epitaph as applying to Livy. It was used for Susy in my stage play but this is origin of this idea as now pertains to the Final Script. (Page 183)

18. OXFORD SEQUENCE - Contained in all my material and basically original with me, greatly developed, of course, by LeMay (Pages 184-186)

19. THE FINAL DEATH BED SCENES OF MARK TWAIN - Originated by me and contained in my stage play in its entirety...down to specific final line of picture - recorded in this Final Script. (Pages 198-190.)

20 My idea of Tom and Huck, Mark's fictional characters, calling for his spirit and taking him with them up into the starry sky where Halley's comet, now returned from the day of his birth, is beckoning....down to the final fade-out of the comet itself, in all its glory...(Pages 190-191)

You will note, Miss Roth, that I have referred to the page numbers of the Final Script for ready reference and on these pages I have noted other information and told where evidence of the origin of this material can be found - among the several treatments and other stage plays and scripts I have prepared and the picture rights to which Mr. Lasky has purchased.

I now wish to list some of the outstanding spots wherein I developed ideas with LeMay as we collaborated together.

MY COLLABORATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS  
TO "THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN"  
WITH ALAN LEMAY:

1. Sam's scene with his mother. (Pages 11 to 15 inclusive)
2. Printing press scene, (16 to 20, inclusive)
3. Sam's scene on river boat with Pilot Bixby (Pages 24-28)
4. Frog leaping scene (Page 71)
5. Scenes in Langdon home (Pages 103-108 inclusive)
6. Scene with Mark and Jervis Langdon (Pages 113-118)
7. Scene with Mark and William Dean Howells (Pages 125-225-B)
8. Scene with Mark dressing and throwing shirts out window. (p-12)
9. Scene with Paige's typesetter, (Pages 145-147 inclusive)
10. Scene with Twain and Col. Rogers (Pages 154-5)
11. Scenes with General Grant (Pages 156-158-D inclusive)
12. Scenes with Twain and Katie over pipe cleaners (P.159-61)

I have not listed a number of minor markings I have made through the Final Script but this should be enough to amply demonstrate my claim to second credit behind Alan Lemay on the Original Screen Play.

I am sending you two critical reports from my files that were sent confidentially to Jesse L. Lasky, since I did not want to disturb Lemay's creative state of mind on the basically good job he was doing and felt that certain changes could be accomplished later. I have now checked through the Final Script and have seen HOW MANY of my suggestions and criticisms were acted upon...and I consider these IDEAS, so presented, a valuable contribution also. You will see for yourself by following the points indicated, how much was really achieved.

Unfortunately I did not keep much of my own material which I would sketch out for Lemay's consideration as I did not anticipate that such a situation as this would come up when I might have to prove my right to better credit consideration. But I have a few which are pertinent that I am sending on.

Mr. Lasky should furnish you with the following list of material, for your REFERENCE:

1. My detailed CHRONOLOGY with IDEA CHART, all bound together.
2. My first LONG TREATMENT in which I sketched many possible dramatic scenes in the life of TWAIN.
3. My ROUGH DRAFT TREATMENT, in which I followed out an idea of presentation given me.
4. My STAGE PLAY on "MARK TWAIN"
5. ORIGINAL SCREEN TREATMENT By Alan LeMay and Harold M. Sherman (Referred to as Master Scene Screen Treatment)
6. FINAL SCRIPT on which LeMay and I both worked, and which I left a criticism on with Lasky, under date of April 27th, 1942.
7. SHOOTING SCRIPT...the real FINAL SCRIPT which I have just read and am returning herewith.
8. My second "MARK TWAIN" play in which I put further new ideas developed between the times I worked on the Screen Treatment with LeMay and was rehired for a few weeks to work with him on the Screen Play.

I have done a mountainous amount of work over the past five years on this MARK TWAIN assignment, and MUCH OF IT is in evidence in this FINAL SCRIPT.

Alan LeMay himself should be the first to accord me this credit. I have no way of knowing whether this credit was set up by Mr. Lasky and Warner Brothers or whether at Alan's request. Despite the accepted manner of our working together, he and his secretary, Miss Roddick KNOW that I adapted myself willingly and gladly to his creative style because I felt I could be MOST HELPFUL by so doing. It was not an easy thing to do, creatively...as my record shows that I have done an immense amount of writing on my own...but I am TREMENDOUSLY HAPPY over the RESULTS as evidenced by this FINAL SCRIPT...and I only hope that the entire situation may end happily with my being given the credit that is my due. As I may have said before, Alan LeMay RICHLY DESERVES first credit but he could not have accomplished what he did without my very substantial contribution.

I therefore feel that the CREDIT LISTING  
should read:

ORIGINAL SCREEN PLAY by ALAN LEMAY and HAROLD M. SHERMAN

ADDITIONAL DIALOGUE By HARRY CHANDLEE (I could not recognize  
his dialogue but it  
may be there)

All biographical material based on works owned  
or controlled by the Mark Twain Company, and  
the play, "MARK TWAIN", by Harold M. Sherman.

When this matter is settled, I would appreciate  
a copy of the FINAL SCRIPT for my own files and a return  
of this material I am sending you.

Will you please wire me the DECISION?

And may I thank you, deeply, for your  
representation on my behalf? I hope to be back in  
Hollywood in the not too distant future and to come  
in and really get acquainted with you people.

Sincerely,



42-224  
2480  
October 4, 1942.

Dear Alan: [LeMay]

I have just read the shooting script of "THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN" and I am hastening to write you my unqualified endorsement of it and my congratulations for having accomplished a **MAGNIFICENT JOB!**

My ~~dreams~~ and faith that "Mark Twain" would ultimately turn out all right have now been fulfilled. I do not have to see the picture to know that, if the production was at all competent (which I'm sure it was) - a great popular success awaits it!

When I wired my protest last week that I felt I merited a better credit than the slight recognition of "additional dialogue", I had no knowledge then of what the "shooting script" was like or whether I could approve personally of the story, especially the latter half dealing with the mature Twain.

I had sent a letter of criticism and suggestions to Lasky after reading the screen play completed prior to my departure, as you perhaps know. At that time, I was not in agreement with you on certain story and character development angles - most of these objections pertaining to the mature Twain - but I did not want to disturb your own creative drive toward your planned objectives while you were in "white heat". Then, too, Lasky had told me you were to come back on the job for some "clean-up" work after he had received critical reactions on the script so I felt this an opportune moment to go on record.

You will remember, when we left the studio after completing our screen treatment, I predicted this work would not be lost - that we would again be back on the job. This came to pass, and, while my role was not to be as actively on the firing line as yours - the final great result achieved speaks for itself.

You have never seen me at my creative best for the reason that I adapted myself, from the first, to your style of writing, out of deference to your much greater picture writing experience. I did not feel that writing parallel competitive scenes and "jockeying for position", each day striving for personal creative credit, would accomplish any fine purpose, so I tried to be as serviceable as I could, with the material I had created for you to draw upon, and my ideas, suggestions and reactions. As a writer you know that when you are letting the other fellow carry the "creative ball", your own ball does not roll as well. Consider your having to try to work, with your creative temperament and writing habit, as I elected to collaborate with you.

This was not an easy assignment for me but I did it gladly and willingly, and would do it again, because of my fundamental confidence in your ability and your integrity.

That this was wise procedure insofar as our two totally different temperaments and talents are concerned has now been amply demonstrated in what has resulted - a SUPERB shooting script and what I know will be an outstanding picture!

Because you have been in the "writing saddle" on this assignment you no doubt, at surface glance, have felt that you deserved sole credit on the screen play. Actually, as one analyzes the structure and scenes, much of my material and many of my ideas, put in final form by you, are in evidence. The shooting script is a VAST IMPROVEMENT over the Final Script I read in Hollywood - many of the changes I suggested have been made - and the critical points I raised have been corrected.

There is only one word for it - over-used as it recently has been - TERRIFIC! And I am sure you realize that any differences of opinion I have held at successive stages have only been with the best interests of the Twain picture in mind, from my viewpoint.

I like and admire you very much and have been pulling for you all the way through to do just what you have done!

Will you please remember me to the immortal Gus (Nurse, oh Nurse!) and give Martha's and my best to Arlene. I am sorry we did not see both of you again before our leaving Hollywood. We decided to depart suddenly as interests developed here in Chicago, and I phoned your home twice but got no answer. They told me at the Marx office where I returned your "Northwest Mounted" script that you and Arlene were away on a few days' vacation trip. Previous to that I had talked with Arlene and had hoped you would phone me back.

I am still working on the dramatization of the life of JANE ADDAMS OF HULL HOUSE. If and when you come this way, let us know!  
Best to you - - Sincerely-

42-227

TYPE

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# WESTERN UNION (46)

1201

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DL=HOLLYWOOD CALIF 7 1120A  
 HAROLD K. SHERMAN CAMBRIDGE HOTEL  
 550 DIVERSEY PARKWAY

RECEIVED  
 7 PM 2:45

COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY GUILD TO ARBITRATE YOUR CLAIM FOR CREDIT "MARK TRAIN" HAS RULED CREDIT SHALL READ SCREEN PLAY LEMAY ADAPTATION LEMAY AND SHERMAN ADDITIONAL DIALOGUE CHANDLER. SOURCE CREDIT AS YOU SUGGESTED TO OBRINGER=

SCREEN WRITERS GUILD INC.

LEMay CHANDLER

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

42-228

242 F

October 7, 1942.

Miss Ann Roth,  
Screen Writers' Guild,  
1655 N. Cherokee Ave.,  
Hollywood, Cal.,

Dear Miss Roth:

Thank you and the Arbitration  
Committee for their action on my plea for  
better credit consideration.

If you know the actual  
wording and how it is to be framed on the  
screen, I would appreciate being advised. (Titlecards

I, of course, accept the  
ruling, with appreciation. I have gladly  
paid LeMay high credit for the work he has  
done but felt that my own contribution had  
been grossly under-rated.

Perhaps I may serve the Guild  
in some capacity one of these days. As a  
new member, I want to tell you again how  
grateful I am to you for your services to me.

Sincerely,

42-230

2494

DATA FOR RECORDS

TITLE OF PHOTOPLAY "THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN"

Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc. PRODUCTION and \_\_\_\_\_ RELEASE  
(Producing Company) (Releasing Company)

COMPLETED 9/22/42

COMPANY EXECUTIVE IN GENERAL CHARGE JACK L. WARNER

PRODUCED BY JESSE L. LASKY

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER JULIUS EVANS

DIRECTED BY IRVING RAPPER

FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JESS HIBBS

SOURCE MATERIAL  
Adapted from Works owned or controlled by the Mark Twain Estate  
(Title of Published Work or Produced Play)

Play 2  
Novel \_\_\_\_\_  
Short Story \_\_\_\_\_  
Non-Fiction 2

By Various Authors  
(Author or Authors)

Or developed from: \_\_\_\_\_  
Original screen story \_\_\_\_\_  
Original idea \_\_\_\_\_  
Unpublished story \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_

SCREEN CREDITS SCREEN PLAY BY ALAN LEMAY  
Adaptation by Alan Lemay and Harold Sherman

Additional dialogue by Harry Chandler  
All biographical material based on works owned or  
controlled by the Mark Twain Company, and the play  
"MARK TWAIN" by Harold M. Sherman

Studio Official James J. Sellen

ML 100

Date 10/8/42

42-231

(248 G)

October 9, 1942.

Mr. James J. Geller,  
Warner Brothers,  
Burbank, California.

Dear Mr. Geller:

I have just received the  
final credit arrangement which is  
okay except for the fact that you  
have left the middle initial out of  
my name in the "adaptation line".

Can you make it read:  
Adaptation by Alan LeMay and Harold M. Sherman.?

Everything else is fine as is.

I hope this will not be too  
much trouble.

Thank you for all past favors.  
Please confirm the above request.

Sincerely,

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEAR"

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD (25)

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, Inc.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

2481  
42-232

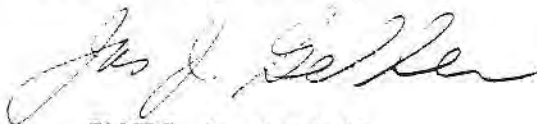
October 12th, 1942

Mr. Harold M. Sherman  
The Cambridge Apt. Hotel  
530 Diversey Parkway  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Replying to your letter of October 9th, please  
be advised that your middle initial has not  
been omitted in the final credit arrangement  
for the picture "THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN".

Yours very truly,



JAMES J. GELLER

JG  
/  
b

**VITAPHONE**  
A SOUND TRADE MARK



42-233

2485

October 13th, 1942.

Mr. Jervis Langdon,  
Elmira, New York.

Dear Jervis:-

We broke the news to Pierce, although I had Comstock do it as I did not care to see him again. He said that in the meantime he had been in touch with you and received the same message. Therefore, we arranged to adjourn the matter to October 30th, as Pierce said that he had to communicate with the west.

Consequently, in about a week or so I shall call him again and ask him whether they are going on or whether they are not going on so we can make our preparations accordingly.

I agree with you as to the telegram which came Saturday as the same thought flashed through my mind that Harnagel or someone at his instance was making a try to see how matters are being handled.

With best regards, I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Charles T. Lark)

Copy to Mr. Sherman for his information.

42-234

248K

October 14, 1942.

Friend Lark:

I had the feeling that this thing had been put off again when I did not hear from you as we approached the "zero hour".

The carbon of the letter to Jervis does not explain much but I infer that you made the offer we discussed, fifty-fifty on all subsequent moneys coming to us on percentages of the gross.

I may be wrong but I think that Clara is looking for a "graceful way out" but is so surrounded by attorneys now, who want to be able to show her that they have accomplished something...she hardly knows where to turn. Now you have given them something to report as a possible compromise...I feel Clara may accept it. If she is reasonable at all, she must have realized how much you have done for her...and how much we have done on this whole project...and she should be considerably ashamed. I do not believe she relishes meeting us in court.

The credits have now come through. LeMay gets credit for the screen play; Then: "Adaptation by Alan LeMay and Harold M. Sherman", followed by the wording you suggested covering the Mark Twain Company's material and my play, "Mark Twain". I feel that I should have shared credit on the screen play, too, but LeMay was on the ground when the credit matter came up and has quite a picture writing reputation...and writers would kill each other out there for "credits", so I suppose this is as good as I could expect, under the circumstances.

-2-

I do not care to put out the money just now for a trip to New York if it can be avoided and hope that your handling may clear this whole unpleasant situation up, once and for all.

I appreciate your standing fast. If Clara casts any insinuations about our character or integrity she had better be careful. I think when this blows over she will be apologetic as usual. When one is surrounded by the human leeches who are sucking at her income, all handing out the wrong advice, one has to be well balanced emotionally to ~~retain~~ the right perspective.

Please keep me advised.

Indian summer prevails here and gas rationing starts soon. Have scarcely used my car for several months anyway, but it must be a strange sensation to be regulated as you people have been. In my opinion, "we ain't seen anything yet!"

Best to you!

Sincerely,

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

42-236

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

2484

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

October 16th, 1942

My dear Harold:

I have been meaning to write to you ever since I received your letter of October 1st.

Mr. Obringer, of course, showed me your letter concerning the credits on Mark Twain, but I understand that you have already been informed that the credits have been finally adjusted to read as follows:

--

Screen Play by Alan LeMay

Adaptation by Alan LeMay and Harold M. Sherman

Additional Dialogue by Harry Chandler

All biographical material based on works owned or controlled by the Mark Twain Company, and the play "Mark Twain" by Harold M. Sherman.

--

Inasmuch as these credits were finally determined by the Screen Writers Guild, as often happens in matters of this kind, I trust that the final billing meets with your approval.

Next week the picture goes to the Music Department for scoring so I don't imagine a print will reach Chicago before the middle of December; however, as soon as prints are sent out to the Exchanges, I will arrange for a showing for you in Chicago.

Regarding your play on the Life of Jane Addams of Hull House, I will be glad to read it if you care to send me a copy.

By the way, when the picture is

VITAPHONE

previewed, I will wire you the reaction of the audience. In the meantime, Bessie joins me in sending you Mrs. Sherman our kindest regards.

Sincerely yours,

*John L. Lusk*

248M 42-239  
October 20, 1942.

Dear Jesse:

Yes, I am satisfied with the final billing and I am immensely pleased at having read the shooting script and I KNOW now it will be a great picture. I will defend this story with you, should it ever be necessary. I could not conscientiously have done this at the time I left Hollywood and submitted my last critical reaction to you but you have made the changes and pointed up the angles as I felt they should be done. It reads magnificently and should play as well in production. How I wish I could be in Hollywood and see your first preview! Can't you find something for me to do!?!?

I hope Alan LeMay has not been too disappointed in sharing some of the credit with me, which I think you will agree he should have done. I have not meant to detract in any way from his first credit but I have contributed much to the underlying tone and character of the whole picture, as I am sure you realize. I have always been frank and outspoken as I know you have wanted me to be - and I tried to work with Alan by "staying out of his way creatively" as much as possible, knowing his temperament. Perhaps, next time, if I should have the pleasure of working for and with you, now that this experience is behind us, I will have earned the right to attempt to do more on my own. It is inhibiting, with every good intention, when one's collaborator feels he has to take the entire bit in his teeth. But I have the highest regard for Alan and the deepest appreciation of his fine job... my congratulations to you and Julius, too, for your own great work.

I am enclosing herewith JANE ADDAMS OF FULL HOUSE. It is my first version, not yet officially approved by Full House. Confidentially,

the woman now in charge, Charlotte Carr, is jealous of Jane Addams' reputation, and opposes any dramatization of her life, feeling it will overshadow what she is now doing at Hull House. However, the Hull House Board, if it is known that there is definite interest in this project, (I am advised by the attorney in charge) can over-ride this.

What I have here, in dramatized play form, is more a motion picture than a stage production as you will see.

For your own purposes of consideration, before I condense and revise for play purposes, you should get a comprehensive idea of the scope of Miss Addams' life as it could be portrayed on the screen.

Having done two outstanding biographical plays on well known and famous American men - isn't it about time you had one on an American woman? And where can one find a more timely humanitarian theme than the one running through Jane Addams' life?

If you are interested, I would forego my original plan of play production and would like to work with you much as we have on the Twain development, approaching the Addams' estate together and completing arrangements.

This play has not been submitted to Broadway producers. I have been holding it for further work.

Please give my best to Bessie. I would appreciate her reaction to this play also. She had such a true feeling for Twain. Mrs. Sherman joins me in regards to you both.  
Sincerely,

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

42-242  
848N

October 22nd, 1942.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge, 550 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Sherman:-

Our case at Redding is set for ten o'clock on the morning of Friday, October 30th, and we are preparing to go to trial at that time. Jervis Langdon will be here on Thursday, the 29th, for a conference.

I plan to call up the other side on Monday, October 26th, and have it out with them as to whether they are actually going to trial on Friday, the 30th. If they say they are not, I can wire you Monday night. I, therefore, suggest you make your plans to be here on the 29th so that we can have a chat in advance and generally prepare for Friday morning. I hope it won't be necessary for you to come, but of course Langdon will also be here Thursday, if it is apparent that they are going to the bat. I do not know whether Clara is coming on or not, but I hope she does, as I would like to have her stick her neck out at Redding, and then ring it for her. She apparently is very much emotionally stirred up, and I only hope she does come.

With best regards, I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Charles T. Lark)



42-243  
2480

# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

October 23, 1942.

Friend Lark:

I am glad you are going to make SURE that the other side is actually going to trial on Friday before telling me to come on - as it will be a financial hardship for me to make the trip at this time. Have I any redress, with us winning this case, for expenses? Shouldn't Clara have to pay for the inconvenience she has put me to? I do not know about these legal points.

I am satisfied, from having seen the script, that most of the things I have fought for have been included, and I can now stand behind the story. We should have a most creditable picture which should make Clara happy, eventually.

I certainly hope, if we go to trial, that Clara is there, for I want to face her myself. And if she charges us with dishonesty or libels us in any way, while I sympathize with her emotional instability from a personal standpoint, she is apt to get herself in for a real lawsuit.

PLEASE advise me, one way or the other, by wire no later than Monday night for it is not easy to get reservations on trains now-a-days, when you want them...besides I have a man coming to see me from out-of-town on business and this whole thing is most complicating.

It may be that they will act upon your own offer to them of a change in the percentage of the gross, at the last minute...but I am with you to the limit on any breakdown of this contract. I feel I have earned every cent of what is coming to me.. and if Clara would only get hold of herself, I think radio and stage developments could come along to add their profits also.

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

Best to you -

COPY TO MR. SHERMAN FOR HIS INFORMATION.

42-244

248P

October 23rd, 1942.

Mr. Jervis Langdon,  
Elmira, New York.

Dear Mr. Langdon:-

Mr. Lark left this noon for Gettysburg, Pa., where he is to attend Father's Day Celebrations at Gettysburg College. He asked me to drop you a note to tell you that Mr. Hackett, of the firm of Cummings & Lockwood, has been ill, but is now improved, and expects to go into the trial of another case the first of the week, so he will not be able to go ahead with the Clemens Estate matter on Friday, October 30th. He is arranging a postponement of the Clemens matter, and will let Mr. Lark know later as to the date set, and when Mr. Lark knows the date he will advise you.

Yours very truly,

(Helen L. Starr)  
Secretary to Mr. Lark.

42-246

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

243R

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

October 27th, 1942.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Road,  
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Sherman:

Mr. Hackett, of Cummings & Lockwood, who is to try the Clemens Estate matter, has gone into the trial of another matter, so has arranged with the other side for an adjournment of the Clemens matter to Friday, November 20th, at eleven o'clock. If there should be any further change in the date I will let you know.

With every good wish, I am,

Yours faithfully,



(Charles T. Lark)

P. S. Since writing the above a phone call from Mr. Hackett came in and it looks now as if it would be adjourned further until sometime in December, as the Probate Judge in Redding is about to undergo an operation.

C. T. L.

42-247

2490

October 29, 1942.

Friend Lark:

This postponement business is getting serious.

If it moves into December I cannot come until some time in January... and you will have to get a postponement.

I am to be business on a community project which may become nationwide and am to speak at Marion, Indiana, before the Kiwanis Club and also the Foreman's Club, in the interest of this project, December 9th.

Preparations for this talk and the community action to follow will keep me busy from December 1st on until the holidays.

If I have to come to New York at my own expense, I do not want to have to rush away to keep dates elsewhere...because I want to attend to other business when in New York...and would otherwise have to make two trips at double the cost...and I cannot afford it.

So please see to it that this hearing does not inconvenience us also.

You have not stated what the reaction was to the suggestion you said you would make of a possible change in the percentages. Lasky says the picture can be shown to me here in Chicago around the middle of December. They may decide to release it some time in January. Maybe the hearing and next payment will come close together - unless Clara decides to settle matters before then.

Please keep me advised. Best to you!

249A  
42-261

November 20, 1942.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
Warner Brothers,  
Burbank, Cal.,

Dear Jesse:

I have had an urgent letter from Basch Radio Productions in New York, stating they have one of the largest agencies in the country interested in a possible MARK TWAIN program, and asking if they might have the right to submit this show for consideration.

Mr. Basch, Jr. wants to know if you are still interested in appearing on the program and what the cost of the production would be as he believes he can get quick action, with myself as the writer.

Do you think the time has arrived when we might give thought to some such project?

I presume the "sneak preview" has not yet been held or you would have wired me a report on it, as promised.

When it is possible for me to have a private showing here, would it be possible for me to have some personal friends see the picture with us? I would deeply appreciate this courtesy.

I await, with interest, your estimate of the picture possibilities of JANE ADDAMS OF HULL HOUSE. We have a set-up similar to Twain and, having gone through this experience once, should be much more effective the next time.

Best regards and good wishes!

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

42-266 TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

252A

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

November 23rd, 1942

Mr. Harold Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversen Parkway, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Harold:

I am in receipt of your letter of  
November 20th.

Regarding the sneak preview, that is  
at least three weeks off as we are scoring the picture  
and it won't be ready until the middle of December.  
I will, of course, wire you after we hold the first  
preview.

I have no idea when the first print will  
reach the Warner Bros. Chicago Exchange; that will  
depend on the release date which has not yet been set.  
I will advise you later on this matter - and when the  
print reaches Chicago, I feel sure that I can arrange  
with Warner Bros., so you can invite some of your friends  
to the projection room.

In regard to a possible radio program,  
I see no harm in Bosch Radio Productions submitting  
the program. If the program emanated from Hollywood,  
I would want to have a part in it. You should charge  
\$500. a week for the rights to the material; \$1,000.  
a week for my services, and whatever figure you care  
to place on your own services as writer.

If you get a proposition that is interesting,  
it will have to be approved by Warner Bros., as they now  
own the radio rights to all the material. The picture  
may not be released until the Spring in which event they  
would not want the radio program to start very much before  
the release date.

I gave "Jane Addams of Hull House" a quick  
reading shortly after it arrived. I cannot interest my-  
self in any new material for many months as the studio has

**VITAPHONE**  
AUDIO TRACE MARK

loaded me with several productions, including "Rhapsody in Blue" - the life of George Gershwin - and "Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court".

I think you should submit "Jane Addams", through some Agent, to the various studios, as undoubtedly a good picture can be obtained from this material. Please let me know if I should return your manuscript, or shall I keep it until you ask me to send it elsewhere?

With kindest regards -

As ever,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed text "As ever,".

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

2520  
42-279

December 17th, 1942.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Sherman:-

Mr. Lark is not in the office today, but phoned and asked me to let you know the hearing as to the Clemens Estate matter is now set for January 5th at Redding, Conn., and he wants you to make your plans to be here at that time. If the date should be changed for any reason, he will let you know. I suppose he would like to have you here in New York on Monday, the 4th, so as to go over matters with you.

With best of wishes for you all for a very Merry Christmas, and a very bright and happy New Year, I am,

Yours very truly,

*Helen L. Starr*

(Helen L. Starr)  
Secretary to Mr. Lark.



42-280

258c



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

December 18, 1942.

Friend Lark:

Your letter at hand through Miss Starr.

This new date for the hearing, as it turns out, is a tough break for me. I have hit the lowest ebb financially that I have been in, in a long time. Just recently, I have been given an order for several articles for Coronet Magazine here...but I cannot expect any remuneration until around February 1st. I am near the sale of my radio program of personal philosophy, which I had on the air in New York in the years 1935 and '36, but this is a month off from realization, once sold. My brother's family have needed help, also my mother, during these times...and I just do not have the money to make the trip to New York at present, and meet expenses here. We are spending a most quiet, economic Christmas as a result.

Would it be possible for you to loan me \$250.00, if this case cannot be postponed for a month or so? I would pay you back as soon as humanly possible and certainly no later than our receipt of the next payment from Warners. I am as eager as you to meet Clara and face this thing out in court, and get it cleared up. I am terribly sorry to be in this temporary straitened condition but these are the absolute facts and I do not know of any place where I can get the money to come. Of course, if you can get a month's postponement, I have every hope I'll be out from under...I can certainly be no worse off than at this moment...and I know good things are on the way. If you feel we should go through with this on schedule and can send me your check for \$250.00, I'll be there on Monday, January 4th, ready to go to court with you. Please advise at once. My best to you!

Sincerely -



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

42-282

12-18-42

Los Angeles Times

## Jesse Lasky's Daughter and Officer Wed

SAN ANTONIO, Dec. 17. (AP) Miss Betty Lasky, daughter of Jesse L. Lasky, Hollywood film producer, and Lieut. M. H. Barasch, Brooks Field student observer, were married in the Lasky suite at a hotel here this afternoon.

In addition to the bride's parents, only a few close friends, including Col. Stanton Smith, Brooks Field commandant, and Mrs. Smith, were present at the simple ceremony. Mrs. Charles Davis and Miss Jewel Kirk, both of San Antonio, were matron of honor and bridesmaid. Lieut. David Turner of Brooks Field was best man.

The bride was dressed in a blue gabardine tailleur with corsage of white orchids.

Lieut. Barasch, who was a civilian pilot before he entered the Army, said the honeymoon will have "to wait until after the war."

43-13

261A

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

January 9th, 1945.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
330 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Sherman:-

Mr. Lark is at home, but asked me to write you that it looks as if the Lark Twain matter was going to be settled on the basis we had originally suggested, giving the Lark Twain Company instead of one third, one-half of the receipts over \$2,000,000. from the picture, and also one-half of the receipts from radio rights. We will know more about the settlement on Monday, but in the meantime the trial has been adjourned to the 28th, and will probably not be held at all.

With every good wish for the New Year to you and Mrs. Sherman, I am,

Yours sincerely,

*Helen L. Starr*

(Helen L. Starr)  
Secretary to Mr. Lark.

COPY

43-24 262 c  
WARNER BROS.  
PICTURES, INC.  
West Coast Studios  
Burbank, Calif.

January 20th, 1943

Office of  
Jesse L. Lasky

Mr. Charles T. Lark,  
527 Fifth Avenue,  
New York City, New York.

Dear Mr. Lark:

Just a few lines to let you know that we had our first, what we call out here, "sneak" preview to try out our "Mark Twain" picture on the public and I am happy to advise you that the picture was received with the greatest acclaim and enthusiasm. It ran for two hours and thirteen minutes - still, no one moved from his seat; in fact, the audience indicated the deepest interest and satisfaction as the picture unfolded.

We have a practice here of passing out postcards addressed to the studio, asking the audience to please convey any criticisms or reactions they might have from witnessing the first preview of the picture. I have had a copy made of the comments from the first cards that have been received, and enclose the same herewith - which is a pretty good indication that we have a very successful box office attraction on our hands.

It is the general opinion of the executives who saw the picture that it is a distinguished and important contribution to the screen.

I am also enclosing copy of a wire which Mr. Charles Einfeld, the Head of our Publicity and Exploitation Department, sent to his staff in New York.

It will be sometime before the picture is released, but as soon as a print reaches New York, I will arrange for you and your friends to see it privately at the Warner Bros. projection room.

Your judgment in the handling of this important item for the Mark Twain Estate will be more than vindicated after this picture is released.

With my very kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd) JESSE L. LASKY

43-22

262 A.

Charge to the account of

\$

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
DOMESTIC	CABLE
TELEGRAM	ORDINARY
DAY LETTER	URGENT RATE
SERIAL	DEFERRED
NIGHT LETTER	NIGHT LETTER
SPECIAL SERVICE	SHIP RADIOGRAM

Patrons should check class of service desired, otherwise the message will be transmitted as a telegram or ordinary cablegram.

# WESTERN UNION

1206-B

CHECK
ACCOUNTING INFORMATION
TIME FILED

R. B. WHITE  
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER  
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

January 20th, 1943

To Major Kalmenson, Kalmine, Schneider,  
Blumenstock, Schless, Hummel and Milder

Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc. New York

MARK TWAIN IS EASILY ONE OF FINEST AND MOST DISTINGUISHED  
 PICTURES OF WARNER BROS. LONG CAREER. I ECHO WHAT ONE OF  
 CARDS SAID LAST NIGHT QUOTE A NATION THAT CAN PRODUCE A  
 PICTURE LIKE MARK TWAIN IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR UNQUOTE  
 MARK TWAIN IS A PICTURE WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

Charles Einfeld.

*\* Warner Bros. Director of advertising  
& publicity*

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

202 ED

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

43-25

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

January 20th, 1943

Dear Harold:

We held our first preview of "Mark Twain" at Huntington Park last night, and I hasten to send you word that it was an outstanding success from every standpoint. Mr. Warner, Charlie Einfeld and the other executives were extremely enthusiastic in their praise, and the audience reaction to the picture was perfect.

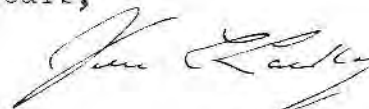
I have had Randy make a copy of the first preview cards that came in, just as they were received - without any eliminations - and I think these cards, coming from the public, pretty well tell the story.

Just wanted you to be one of the first to have the good news - and I want to take this opportunity of thanking you for all you contributed to the success of the picture.

It will be sometime before a print of "Mark Twain" reaches Chicago but the moment it does, I will arrange for you to see it.

With kindest regards to you and Mrs. Sherman, I am

Sincerely yours,



P.S. Enclosed is copy of a telegram Charlie Einfeld sent to the New York staff which just came to my desk. This tells you how he feels about the picture.

VITAPHONE

43-26 262E  
PREVIEW COMMENTS

THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN

January 19th, 1943

ENJOYED IT MORE THAN ANY PICTURE OF RECENT MONTHS. A COUNTRY THAT CAN PRODUCE MARK TWAINS IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

A TRULY GREAT VISUAL STORY OF AN AMERICAN ALL AMERICA LOVES AND ADORES. A CROSS SECTION OF THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIVING. THE MOST NOTED ACTORS PLAYED THE BEST PARTS, NATURALLY; BUT, MARK'S WIFE WAS THE REAL INSPIRATION FOR HIM.

THE BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR - A WONDERFUL TRIBUTE TO MARK TWAIN - A WARNER BROS. TRIUMPH - A HEART AND SOUL MOVING PICTURE.

THE PICTURE WAS PERFECT. THE BEST I'VE SEEN FOR A LONG TIME.... F. MARCH WAS THE MOST OUTSTANDING BUT THE REST WERE ALSO VERY GOOD.

THE PICTURE WAS SUPER. HAVEN'T SEEN ONE LIKE IT FOR YEARS.

I COULDN'T FIND A SINGLE FLAW WITH THE PICTURE. LEAVE IT AS IT IS - DON'T TOUCH IT. IT IS PERFECT. CONGRATULATIONS. FREDRIC MARCH AND ALEXIS SMITH WERE EXCELLENT.

I CONGRATULATE THE PRODUCERS AND DIRECTORS ON AN EXCEPTIONAL PICTURE. EVEN THOUGH IT IS LONG I ASK, IF IT IS POSSIBLE, TO PUBLISH IN ITS ENTIRETY. I BELIEVE THAT THE PICTURE WILL ACCLAIM ITS FULL AIM IN THE PORTRAIT OF MARK TWAIN. THE CUTTING OF EVEN ONE PART WILL TEND TO DRAW FROM THE FULL PORTRAIT OF MARK TWAIN. MARCH WAS EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD.

THE FINEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR. I LIKED ALL PLAYERS.

THIS PICTURE MADE ME FORGET THE WAR. I SHALL SEE IT AGAIN AND TELL MY FRIENDS TO SEE IT. FREDRIC MARCH IS A FINE ACTOR.

THIS WAS A GREAT STORY OF REAL AMERICANS FOR AMERICANS. SPLENDID ACTING.

WARNER BROS. ARE TO BE CONGRATULATED. THEY SURE LEAD THE PARADE IN TURNING OUT WORTHWHILE ENTERTAINMENT. HARD TO SAY WHICH ACTORS WERE THE BEST.

VERY GOOD AND VERY ENLIGHTENING.

THE BEST PICTURE IN YEARS.

PERFECT. DON'T CUT A BIT OF IT.

PERFECT. HOPE EVERYONE WILL SEE IT. ALL EXCELLENT.

I THINK THE PICTURE I JUST SAW WAS THE SYMBOL OF A MAN THAT WILL LIVE THROUGH THE NATION FOR YEARS TO COME AND IN TIME OF WAR, SUCH AS THIS, IT WILL BRING THE PEOPLE THE REALIZATION THAT THEY ARE THE SAME AS MARK TWAIN - PEOPLE WHO CAN, AT LEAST WITHIN THEMSELVES, ENJOY LIFE.

ENJOYED EVERY MINUTE OF THIS LOVELY PICTURE.

I ENJOYED EVERY MOMENT OF IT.

VERY GOOD. SHOULD BE ACADEMY AWARD.

MARK TWAIN'S ADVENTURES IS TRULY ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING AND MOST HUMAN THAT I HAVE EVER SEEN. IT WAS PERFECT.

DON'T YOU DARE MAKE ONE SINGLE CHANGE.

WAS A VERY INTERESTING PICTURE FULL OF HUMAN INTEREST. THE CAST WAS VERY GOOD. THIS IS A PICTURE EVERY YOUNGSTER SHOULD SEE.

THE BEST PICTURE I HAVE SEEN IN A LONG TIME.

Note: All cards acclaimed Fredric March's performance.

WONDERFUL

IT WAS A SWELL PICTURE

IT WAS A VERY GOOD PICTURE. IT REALLY SHOWED THE TRUE LIFE OF TOM SAWYER

WONDERFUL

VERY GOOD. PLAYERS: EXCELLENT

VERY EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE BY FREDRIC MARCH PARTICULARLY GOOD HE IS GETTING THE BREAK HE HAS RATED FOR A LONG TIME.

VERY GOOD

IT WAS SWELL

VERY GOOD

VERY GOOD

PERFECT

THE PICTURE WAS EXCELLENT. FREDRIC MARCH BEST. WIFE ALSO OUTSTANDING. ALL PLAYERS VERY FINE.

THE PICTURE WAS EXCELLENT.

VERY GOOD. I ENJOYED FREDRIC MARCH VERY MUCH.

VERY GOOD. CAST WONDERFUL

LET'S HAVE MORE OF FREDRIC MARCH

VERY GOOD

BOTH PLAYERS (FREDRIC MARCH AND ALEXIS SMITH) PORTRAYED THEIR CHARACTERS BEAUTIFULLY. VERY INSPIRING.

VERY GOOD

GREAT

GREAT

VERY GOOD

VERY GOOD

QUITE ALL RIGHT

BEAUTIFUL MONTAGE SHOTS. MARCH AND SMITH MAKEUP O.K.

SWELL. VERY EXCELLENTLY CHOSEN CAST

VERY GOOD. HUMAN INTEREST

VERY GOOD

A WONDERFUL PICTURE

VERY GOOD

VERY GOOD

VERY VERY GOOD

WELL, FREDDIE DID IT AGAIN. SUPERB. SWELL ALL THE WAY

EXCELIENT

IT WAS AN EXCELLENT PRODUCTION; HOWEVER, I THINK IT WAS A LITTLE DRAWN OUT (TOO LONG)

"MARK TWAIN" IS ALMOST AS PAINFUL (AT TIMES) AS MR. CLEMENS' LIFE MUST HAVE BEEN. IT NONETHELESS CAPTURES SOME OF HIS WARM GENTLE HUMOR. YET, FREQUENTLY THE FILM SEEMS TO MAKE TOO GREAT AN ATTEMPT TO DOCUMENT THE CLEMENS CAREER WITHOUT CAPTURING THE REMARKABLE SPIRIT WHICH MADE HIM GREAT. FREDRIC MARCH WITH THE AID OF HIS ELABORATE MAKEUP AND GENERALLY SENSITIVE PERFORMANCE SOMETIMES CONVEYS THE REAL CLEMENS SPIRIT. HIS ANALOGY OF GRANT AND THE WOOLEY BEAR WAS REMARKABLY TOUCHING. NONETHELESS THE ONLY EXCITING PART OF THE FILM WAS THAT WHICH PORTRAYED CLEMENS AS A RIVER BOAT PILOT.



CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

43-31  
265A

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

January 30th, 1943.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Ill.

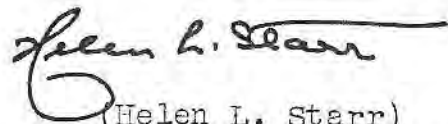
Dear Mr. Sherman:-

Mr. Lark has been housed with a cold and touch of the grippe. The attorneys are working out the details of the settlement agreement, and the proposed form will probably be submitted to Mr. Lark the first of the week. I suppose you know that Mr. Lark and Mr. Langdon plan to retire as Trustees on June 30th, 1943.

I am enclosing for your information copy of Mr. Lasky's letter to Mr. Lark of the 20th, together with copy of the comments made by the audience who saw a private showing of the Mark Twain picture. It looks like a "hit", doesn't it?

With my best wishes to you and Mrs.  
Sherman, I am,

Yours sincerely,



(Helen L. Starr)  
Secretary to Mr. Lark.

Enc.

43-34  
265B



# The Cambridge

~~APARTMENT HOTEL~~

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

February 1, 1943.

Friend Lark:

Thank you for your communications sent through Miss Starr, advising of the status of the Mark Twain matters.

I, too, received word from Jesse Lasky with respect to the preview showing of the picture, and he made this comment to me:

"Just wanted you to be one of the first to have the good news - and I want to take this opportunity of thanking you for all you contributed to the success of the picture."

I note that Mr. Lasky also credited you for your contribution in this behalf, and well he might. Clara will some day realize what an enormous amount of work we have jointly done... There is an old, old saying, "You never miss the water till the well runs dry."

I will be glad to get this matter adjusted and signed, so we can forget this whole unpleasant business.

I am sorry you are down with a cold. Things are picking up for me here and, in a few weeks, I think I will be set for a long time to come. May then be able to make a needed trip to New York and see you. It will be nice to have a relaxed time with you...and learn in detail all that has happened on the "eastern seaboard" since I left!

Best to you! Sincerely,



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

43-48

2-21-  
1943

28cc

STANDARD TIME INDICATED
RECEIVED AT
TELEPHONE YOUR TELEGRAMS TO POSTAL TELEGRAPH

**Postal Telegraph**

Mackay Radio      All America Cables  
Commercial Cables      Canadian Pacific Telegraphs



THIS IS A FULL RATE TELEGRAM, CABLEGRAM OR RADIOGRAM UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED BY SYMBOL IN THE PREAMBLE OR IN THE ADDRESS OF THE MESSAGE. SYMBOLS DESIGNATING SERVICE SELECTED ARE OUTLINED IN THE COMPANY'S TARIFFS ON HAND AT EACH OFFICE AND ON FILE WITH REGULATORY AUTHORITIES.

Form 16

C. 8064

LB86S (TEN) 39 NL=PFO LOSANGELES CALIF 19=

=HAROLD M SHERMAN=

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY (CHICAGO ILL)=

MR SHEEHAN SCHEDULED ARRIVE CHICAGO SUNDAY FEBRUARY TWENTY  
 FIRST VIA SUPER CHIEF TRAIN EIGHTEEN BEDROOM "1" CAR 103. 183  
 PLEASE MEET HIM AND MAKE YOURSELF KNOWN TO HIM SO THAT YOU MAY  
 DISCUSS RICKENBACKER STORY WITH HIM IN PERSON. REGARDS=  
 JASON S JOY 20TH CENTURY FOX FILM STUDIO. =:

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

April 13th, 1943

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Harold:

My daughter, Betty, is passing through Chicago next Wednesday, April 21st, on her way to Louisville, Ky. She will arrive in Chicago on the Santa Fe "Chief" at 1.25 pm on Wednesday.

A publicity man from Warner Bros., is meeting Betty and will take her to the Blackstone, but as her train for Louisville does not leave Chicago until 11.30 pm Wednesday, she will have a considerable stopover, and I thought if you or Mrs. Sherman would have the time, it might be nice for her to meet you.

Betty was married in San Antonio last December to a Lieutenant in the Air Corps - Lt. Herman M. Barasch. They have been visiting with us for a few days as her husband had a furlough. Betty will be joining her husband at his new post at Ft. Knox, Kentucky, and that accounts for her being alone on this trip as her husband had to fly to Ft. Knox last night.

I will give Betty your telephone number and she will call you after she arrives at the hotel on Wednesday.

By the way, Betty saw "Mark Twain" and will tell you all about it. We won't have a print in Chicago for at least a couple of months and that is why I have not communicated with you. The picture is being held back for release until July or August at the earliest, due to a heavy backlog of war pictures which must go out ahead of it.

I will ask Betty to bring you some still pictures of the "Mark Twain" production.

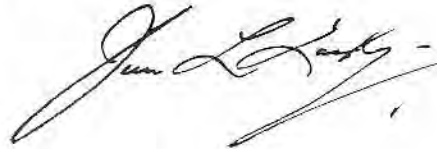
My family is scattered all over the country - Jesse is a First Lieutenant stationed at Astoria, Long Island. Bill is a Corporal stationed at Fitzsimons Hospital, Denver - and now Betty will be with her husband at Godman Field, Ft. Knox, Kentucky -- so Mrs. Lasky and I find ourselves alone.

VITAPHONE

I am still preparing the life of George Gershwin -  
"Rhapsody in Blue" - which probably won't go in production until  
July.

Trusting this finds you and Mrs. Sherman well -  
and with kindest regards in which Bessie joins, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sam L. Hardy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Sincerely yours,".

43-76



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

April 15, 1943.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
Warner Brothers,  
Burbank, Cal.,

Dear Jesse:

I have just dispatched a wire telling you that we will be happy to see Betty and we thank you for giving us this opportunity to enjoy her company.

If this plan is acceptable, Martha would like to call for Betty at the hotel and take her to Radio Station WGN, to attend my "Your Key to Happiness" broadcast, from 6:45 to 7 p.m. and then we will go out to dinner and spend the evening until train time. Have Betty phone Mrs. Sherman at Lakeview 6401, Extension 507, when she gets to the Blackstone and confirm this arrangement. If agreeable with her.

The enclosed announcement may be of interest to you. I started, on April 5th, a radio series for the Goldblatt Brothers Department Stores, three fifteen minute periods a week, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 6:45 to 7, and a half hour on Sundays, 6:30 to 7. These personal philosophic talks have already met with a wonderful reception. They are similar to the broadcasts I made over Columbia network in New York some years ago - but I have had much more experience since then, in experimentation with the higher powers of mind, and feel that I can bring a ~~much~~ mature presentation of this subject to the radio as a result. You know this has been my hobby interest in life.



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-2-

Goldblatt Brothers are the fastest growing department store chain in America. Last year they did a \$56,000,000 gross business. They are now in the process of buying a thousand department stores throughout the country - that they may launch a nation-wide chain after the war.

I have a long term contract with them, and they are building a large auditorium for me on the eighth floor of their State Street store, where I may make short talks on this personal philosophy as contained in my book, "Your Key to Happiness." I am also to have an office adjoining the auditorium for consultation purposes on personal problems.

You are aware that millions of people today are in need of a simple philosophy of living which can restore faith in themselves, their fellow man and in God. This need is going to increase as this war situation moves toward a crisis.

Jason Joy phoned me from 20th Century several months ago and said he had talked with you about the possibility of my working on the Eddie Rickenbacker picture story. I saw Winfield Sheehan between trains here and told him that I had actually been working on this story for two months before they got in touch with me - because I felt it could be one of the greatest dramas of all time - and I wanted to see what I could do with his life. Before I could get ready to act, I then learned that Christy Walsh (an old friend of mine) and Sheehan, had secured the rights.



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-3-

Despite the fact that I ultimately was not hired to work on the picture - and I explained to Sheehan that I would have to do my writing in Chicago because of my radio contract which would soon become active...I went ahead and completed a full treatment which amounts to a shooting script. I thought Sheehan would be happy to read it and, if he found much of value, to make me a reasonable offer for it.

To my great astonishment, Sheehan said: "Sherman, you can't possibly know enough about Rickenbacker's life, with your research at the library and other sources open to you, to create a good, competent story. I refuse to read it because you may say later that my writers have taken advantage of you...and I am thoroughly satisfied with the writing arrangements I have made."

Some time, Jesse, for your own information, I would like you to see this treatment I have written on Rickenbacker's life, which I think will be an eye-opener to you. It runs 135 pages and contains SO MUCH that needs to be in the story, of a highly exciting and yet inspirational nature...My own experiences with Sir Hubert Wilkins and his Arctic adventure equipped me peculiarly to sympathetically treat the Southwest Pacific episode in Rickenbacker's life...and I know the automobile industry from having worked two years in the Ford Motor Company at the time Rickenbacker himself was in the automotive game. I mention the above because apparently you were consulted by Jason Joy as to my ability...and also because I have heard rumors that the 20th Century deal may not be entirely set...and that Warners were also interested in the Rickenbacker life story.



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO





# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-4-

I will appreciate any advice or suggestions you may be able to give me, confidentially, on this Rickenbacker matter for it seems ridiculous that a producer would not consider a treatment that a writer of standing has prepared when it might contain much of great value, saving him months of preparation.

When time comes for the release of the "Mark Twain" picture, I am sure I can be most helpful, through my "Your Key to Happiness" program, which reaches a wide audience in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Kentucky and other states. The Goldblatt Brothers will want to tie in and make some arrangement of a merchandising nature so that certain selected customers may attend...or they might even wish to buy the house out of a section thereof, for a run of nights. If your publicity and exploitation department would be interested in working with the Goldblatt Stores here...so they could have exhibits in their State Street windows of the MARK TWAIN PICTURE...identifying me with it...by the time the picture is released I will have a large audience to interest in Mark Twain's life.

I have done nothing more, as yet, with "JANE ADDAMS OF HULL HOUSE". These other developments have taken much of my time. I suppose you still have the script. Do you have any suggestions concerning it?

My warmest regards to Bessie and yourself...and again, we are looking forward to seeing Betty next Wednesday.

Sincerely,



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

43-78

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

April 17th, 1943

Dear Harold:

Thanks for your wire - and also for your interesting letter which reached me this morning. Betty will 'phone Mrs. Sherman as soon as she reaches her hotel and she looks forward to attending your broadcast and dining with you - and, no doubt, I can count on you to put her on the train.

I read with interest the announcement of your program "Your Key to Happiness", and immediately it occurred to me what a swell title this would make for an uplifting movie. I wish I could talk this over with you -- you might write a fictional story in which the hero, broadcasting very much as you do, becomes involved in the lives of an interesting group of people; working out a romantic and spiritually uplifting story. Here's a real opportunity for your talent, because you own a box-office title in "Your Key to Happiness" and, as you so aptly mentioned, millions of people are in need of a simple philosophy of living which can restore faith in themselves, their fellow man and in God. I could get enthusiastic over producing such a picture, and I urge you to try and work out such a story.

I should have written you before about the Eddie Rickenbacker situation. When Winnie Sheehan obtained the rights, he called me for advice on who could prepare the material. I recommended you highly and gave him your address, and he said he would surely get in touch with you. Sheehan owns the rights and has writers at work on this subject. My advice would be to offer to submit the script to him through me, if you wish, trusting to his sense of honor to buy your material if he can use any of it. You would have to agree to hold him harmless on any future charge of plagiarism before he would agree to read your material.

I will try and get in touch with Sheehan and talk the situation over with him, as it seems a shame that your material should not be read and carefully considered.

VITAPHONE

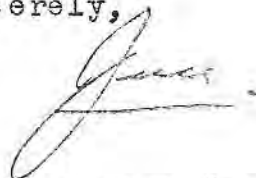
I will check up the question of our publicity department working with the Goldblatt Bros. Department Stores in Chicago on exploiting the "Mark Twain" picture. This sounds like a grand idea and you will hear more from me about it later.

No date has been set for the release of "Mark Twain", and it may be held back until September or October due to an enormous backlog of big pictures that must be released ahead of it.

Mrs. Lasky joins me in sending our best to you and yours - and we are grateful to you for offering to take care of Betty so nicely.

With warmest regards -

Sincerely,



P.S. I had our story department consider "Jane Addams of Hull House", but nothing came of it. I will return the manuscript to you next week.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill.

43-82



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

April 22, 1943.

Dear Jesse:

By now, at seven this morning, Betty has safely arrived at Louisville. We saw her on the train last night, after a most pleasant visit in her room at the Blackstone.

Martha went down to see Betty in the afternoon, who had expressed a desire to visit Chicago's art museum - but when she arrived she found Betty indisposed. After being of what aid she could, she left Betty to rest, with the hope that she might be well enough to attend the broadcast and go out to dinner with us. We had made a reservation at the Empire Room in the Palmer House but these plans had to be cancelled as Betty only felt equal to tea and toast in her room. However, we joined her after dinner downtown ourselves, and found her feeling much better. She is a fine person and we enjoyed the time spent with her, only regretting that her temporary indisposition prevented us from really entertaining her. She was all right when she took the train. She is certainly crazy about her husband and this made us happy because our own wedded happiness has meant so much to us, it is cheering to note this happiness in others.

Jesse, the stills on the Twain picture are most intriguing. They whet my appetite enormously to see the picture and I hope, the moment a print arrives in Chicago, you can arrange a private showing for us to see it and have a few of our friends see it. Do you have any SHOTS of the Halley's comet opening and closing? If so, I would love to see them!



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-2-

I trust that the credit titles give me a fairly good break, too, so that this may tie in with publicity possibilities here.

About the picture possibilities of a story based on "YOUR KEY TO HAPPINESS", I like your suggestion immensely. I have given thought, for some years, for a way in which a simple, acceptable, workable philosophy of life might be presented...and I will certainly get to work on a story outline at the first opportunity. I am getting heart-touching material in the mail every day which could be woven in.

REFER to your copy of YOUR KEY TO HAPPINESS and note that I EMPHASIZE: "We THINK in terms of PICTURES." I state that "As a man thinks (pictures) in his mind - so IS he!" That our mental pictures become the blueprints which the creative power in our inner mind takes to build for us in our real lives WHAT we have PICTURED. Then I give a technique of right thinking wherein I instruct the reader to visualize a BLANK, WHITE MOTION PICTURE SCREEN in his inner mind and to SEE HIMSELF on this screen, DOING or BEING or HAVING the thing he most desires! Such a philosophic suggestion, properly DRAMATIZED, can advance the cause of the motion picture EDUCATIONALLY and its enthusiastic acceptance as a TREMENDOUS FORCE FOR GOOD, more than anything I know.

I would like, some day, to do a series of shorts, after a big feature picture might be produced on YOUR KEY TO HAPPINESS, in which I bring successful men and women to the screen and, through interview and actual scenes of their lives - PROVE TO PEOPLE that these SUCCESSFUL men and women PICTURED their success in their dreams and aspirations BEFORE it came to pass!



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-3-

How easy and inspiring it then becomes for me to TALK direct to the picture audience, in a personal, intimate way - and point out to them that THEY can re-make their own lives IF they will throw the right kind of PICTURES on their own INNER motion picture screen!

Jesse, if we could work together to such great end - we might render a great service to humanity. I would love to sit down with you and talk this whole project out. I think we could make a feature picture that would LIVE. (This is not because of Harold Sherman or any desire to glorify myself - but because the philosophy is BASIC, it appeals to all races and creeds and those with no creeds at all.)

The greatest problem we have to face in the coming world crisis is reaching the masses with a vital message which can influence mass thinking along highly constructive, inspirational and self-help lines. If this is not done - all material changes can do little good. That has been the trouble in the past - we have launched great social and economic plans on paper - but human greed, selfishness, lust and all other of these destructive human forces have gone on, unchanged. Humans have been given nothing simple enough and understandable enough in the way of a commonly acceptable philosophy to take hold of... "Your Key to Happiness" opens the door for them - but does not change their religion or take them away from any of their present beliefs - it AMPLIFIES their present faith...and lifts their spirits... making it possible for the churches and all other good influences to reach the masses again...and for prejudices and hatreds to be overcome. Until we realize we are basically the product of our own thinking - few of us are going to feel



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-4-

compelled to change our points of view and our mental attitude. But once it dawns on us, dramatically and forcefully, that we have brought many wrong conditions on ourselves, then we are going to sit up and take notice! Such a picture as you contemplate could be the talk of the country!

Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of THE LIFE OF EDDIE RICKENBACKER, with a little letter in which I give Winfield Sheehan the assurance, through you, that I will not hold him liable. It will be most satisfying to me to have YOU read this treatment as an evidence of what I can do on my own initiative. I think you will see many features in this treatment which you will realize that Sheehan cannot well do without... and which would probably not enter the minds of many screen writers, however capable they may be. You see, Jesse, the Rickenbacker story has interested me vitally from one ALL IMPORTANT ANGLE...it is essentially a FAITH story...one of the greatest of modern times...and this is the way I have developed it, subordinating every other theme because NO THEME can TOP this one! The story carries terrific inspiration for youth... and for people of all ages...and moves like lightning in this stream-lined treatment.

I was left with the feeling, after talking with Sheehan (confidentially) that he has a fairly large story budget...and he is not desirous of moving too speedily in solving his story problems or making it appear too easy. I can sympathize with his painstaking care...but you know, from the vast amount of research work I have done on Twain and the way I dig into things that it is not my habit to only skim the surface. I will greatly appreciate your own reaction to this story when you have read it...and any help you can give toward its consideration.



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

43-83



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

April 22, 1943.

DEAR Jesse:

I am sending you, herewith, at your kind suggestion, a copy of the treatment I have prepared on THE LIFE OF EDDIE RICKENBACKER.

I am interested in your reading this treatment that you may be acquainted with the nature of my work in this instance - for what bearing it may have on future work I would like to do for and with you.

You will notice that I have had to take very little poetic license in the shaping of the entire story.

My opening scene is fictitious but distinctly in character with the "speed mania" of young Rickenbacker and his dare-devil qualities. Stove is a composite of several buddies Eddie has had in life, a Stuart Erwin type, and gives opportunity for comedy relief, all legitimate. Eddie's romance, which has to be touched up a bit, is fictionized and fitted swiftly into the story - reduced to the minimum and yet kept entertaining... because Eddie's romance is NOT his story... although the faith and spirit of his wife behind him is NECESSARY, and so established. Eddie's raising the money to buy Eastern Airlines is fictionized a trifle - dramatized is a better word because he DID go to Wall Street and come back with the money in short order. This is about ALL I have had to do in varying from his REAL LIFE experiences which have been



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO





# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-2-

condensed and vitalized and placed in proper proportion to their importance and value in the story.

I learned, through research and preparation on the Mark Twain story, that a writer can get muscle-bound with material. There are only so many dramatizable scenes in any character's life which can be used - and if you have selected a set of strong scenes to form a good story line, you can continue your research for many months and not be any better off. Quite often, you are only made confused and uncertain by other good material which cannot be fitted in.

In the case of RICKENBACKER I found enough excellent material available on various phases of his life to build a basic story with the minimum of fictionizing and taking of poetic license. And I was free, in this instance, from the overwhelming burden of too much good material such as existed with Mark Twain.

You will note some NOVEL SCENES and DRAMATIC IDEAS, introduced into this treatment, which will be MOST INSPIRING on the screen...scenes which this picture should not be without. I think you will like the SPEED with which this story moves - THE SAGA of transportation, from the horse and buggy days to our present speed era, which you feel throughout the entire story - and the qualities of human COURAGE and FAITH it realistically depicts.



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

Please assure Mr. Winfield Sheehan, if you feel you can recommend this treatment to him,



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-3-

that I will hold him harmless of any future charge of plagiarism, if he will be so good as to read and consider this material. I should not have done this great amount of work did I not deeply feel that I had something extremely worthwhile to contribute.

Thank you for your expression of interest and your confidence in me.

Sincerely,



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

43-87

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEAR"

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD (25)

# WARNER BROS.

PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

*Handwritten scribble*

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

April 27th, 1943

Dear Harold:

Betty wrote me telling me of your and Mrs. Sherman's kindness to her during her stopover in Chicago. Please accept my sincere appreciation. As you see, I did not hesitate to call on you and I knew you would come through as you did.

I have written Winnie Sheehan as per the enclosed.

You may be sure I will let you know when a print of "Mark Twain" arrives in Chicago.

The idea you outlined for a series of shorts, bringing to the screen successful men and women, has possibilities, but I suggest you concentrate first on a feature picture on the same subject. There is no rush in this matter. Some day I will be passing through Chicago, probably on my way to the opening of "Mark Twain", in the Fall, and we will get together and discuss the whole matter.

Please extend my thanks to Mrs. Sherman for the Betty incident - and with kindest regards to you both -

As ever,



P.S. The Still Department informs me that no stills were taken which show Halley's Comet.

Harold M. Sherman, Esq.  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Ill.

VITAPHONE

43-88

[LASKY - WINFIELD SHEEHAN]

Brown-Columbus 4/25/43  
\* \* \*  
The Eddie Rickenbacker picture will not be delayed but is being put into work with a list of writers that sound like Who's Who in the literary world. Edwin Burke, Academy winner of a few years ago, and Paul Green, Pulitzer prize winner, are preparing the story and such brilliant writers as Alva Johnson, John Lardner, Isabel Leighton, Lee Loeb and John Kobler are contributing and assisting in writing the treatment. Winfield Sheehan, whose coup in buying the Rickenbacker story, in the face of terrific competition, was big news a few months ago, has returned to Hollywood. He spent months at Columbus, Ohio, in Rickenbacker's birthplace and in the east with Eddie collecting material.  
\* \* \*

April 27th, 1943

Dear Winnie:

My friend, Harold M. Sherman, has sent me an elaborate 144-page treatment of the life story of Eddie Rickenbacker, to which he apparently has devoted considerable time. I believe he spoke to you about this in Chicago, but, at that time, you feared reading it as it might conflict with work that you were doing and result in trouble in the future.

Well, Sherman has written me that he will agree to hold you harmless of any charge of plagiarism in the future, if you will be good enough to read and consider his material.

I have great faith in Sherman, and it is only with the desire of being helpful to you both that I now make the suggestion that you let me send you the treatment, as you might find something in it of real value. If you like, you could have a letter prepared for Sherman to sign in which he releases you in advance from any claims of whatsoever nature in the future. On the other hand, if you find incidents or material in his script that you like, he would, no doubt, sell you the material at a very reasonable cost.

Please let me know what your wishes are in the matter. I know how tough it is to prepare subjects of this kind - and I have an inward urge to be of assistance to you in any way I can.

With kindest regards -

As ever,

Mr. Winfield Sheehan,  
20th Century-Fox Film Studios,  
Beverly Hills, California.

Conway  
Access #  
(301) 205-0020

43-14



Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation

STUDIOS  
BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

May 1, 1943

Mr. Harry M. Sherman  
530 Diversey Parkway  
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I received from Jesse Lasky a letter urging me to read and consider a treatment written by you on the story of Eddie Rickenbacker.

I have carefully weighed and considered the matter and have finally reached the same decision - not to accept your treatment - as recited to you in our meeting at the Chicago railroad station.

We have heard the story of Eddie Rickenbacker from his own lips and we have gathered from many sources throughout America other details, characters, and contributions to make up our motion picture story. This is now in the hands of our own able and experienced dramatists, and I have reached the firm decision to stand by the story and screen play created by them.

I regret being compelled to make this decision but feel, on the other hand, that complications, unforeseen, may arise that could make a situation distressing for all concerned.

I have accordingly advised Mr. Lasky that I will not receive or read the treatment prepared by you.

I hope sometime in the future we can work on another story to mutual advantage.

Sincerely,



W. R. Sheehan

WRS:fb

4396



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

May 3, 1943.

Dear Jesse:

Thank you so much for your last letter with enclosure of letter written to Winfield Sheehan on my behalf.

Just this morning I have received a letter from Sheehan, standing by his original decision, NOT to consider my treatment. This attitude is INCREDIBLE to me, as it must be to you, since I was originally contacted by 20th Century and queried on this assignment...but, of course, we will probably have to abide by this decision. Unless, later, dissatisfaction should develop over the story now in preparation.

I am sure you must have seen many situations and features in my treatment well worthy of utilizing. The cost would not have been prohibitive to Sheehan had he considered and wished to buy the material.

I observe that the TREND is toward a spiritual type of picture and I am enclosing carbon copy of a letter written me, indicating the type of interest my program is arousing. It may be that we should consider doing something a little sooner than anticipated if interest like this is to develop. The Goldblatt Brothers are much enthused over the program's reception and will co-operate in every way toward the expansion of the "YOUR KEY TO HAPPINESS" idea, and philosophy.



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

I sent a copy of my book to Betty and husband. Our best to you and Bessie...and my deep appreciation again for your kindnesses!  
Sincerely-

43-97

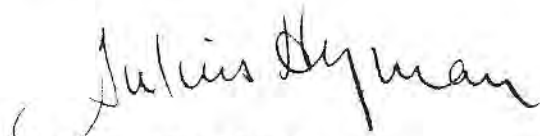
May 3, 1943

Mr. Jesse Lasky  
Warner Brothers Studio  
Burbank, California

My dear Mr. Lasky:

Having just returned from California, I am eager to take this opportunity to thank you for your kindness in permitting Professor C. W. Kearns and me to inspect the Warner Brothers Studio on Wednesday, April 21. As neither of us had ever seen a motion picture studio before, we were both extremely interested in the equipment and techniques employed. I should like especially to commend young Mr. Bill Chulack whose courteous and pleasant guidance made the inspection trip a real pleasure. I shall see Harold Sherman very shortly and shall convey to him the greetings which you extend.

Yours very sincerely,



Executive Vice-President  
VELSICOL CORPORATION

J. HYMAN:hm  
c/c Harold Sherman ✓

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

43-118

June 8th, 1943.

Mr. Harold H. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
550 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Harold:-

Thanks for your letter of May 28th. We are whipping the final agreement into shape, and hope to have everything settled before the 30th, when Jervis and I retire as Trustees of the Estate.

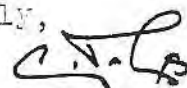
Warners put on a private showing of the Mark Twain picture. I had several friends there to see the picture, including Mrs. Lockis. We are going to have another showing of it about the 22nd, when Jervis will be here. For your information I am enclosing a copy of a letter which I have just written to Mr. Wasky.

You will recall that our son's trust provides that the balance of \$75,000. is to be paid on release of the picture or not later than July 1, 1943. I called Mr. Wilk, of the New York office of Warner Brothers, and asked if he could arrange it so that the check was in our hands by the 30th, and he said that he thought he could arrange this. I assume, as heretofore, the check will be made out in your favor, so I am wondering if you wish to have me deposit it here to your credit in your bank, and then you can draw check for the balance due the Mark Twain Company, which is \$7500., as Jervis and I would like to have this payment made before we retire. Please let me know about this right away - what bank you wish me to deposit the check, etc. You might draw a check in favor of the Mark Twain Company for \$7500., leaving date blank, which I can fill in after the funds have been credited to your account.

I'm glad to hear of your success on "Your Key to Happiness Program", and hope it will continue for a long time.

With every good wish, I am,

Yours faithfully,



(Charles T. Lark)

Enc.



43-114

[CHARLES T. LARK - LASKY]

June 7th, 1943.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky,  
Warner Brothers West Coast Studio,  
Burbank, California.

Dear Mr. Lasky:-

I have been expecting to see Mr. Langdon here for the last couple of weeks so we could talk over the matter of the extension of your contract re "Connecticut Yankee", but I learned that he will not be here for several weeks, and, therefore, took up the matter in a long conference with him over the telephone. He readily consented to amend your contract, dated July 10th, 1941, so as to make the rights cover a period of nine (9) years instead of seven (7) as originally stipulated. You will recall that in July, 1942, the Mark Twain Company agreed to amend your contract so as to have the term read for a period of eight (8) years from July 10th, 1941, and, therefore, the present extension will further amend the same by amending your original contract to read for a period of nine (9) years from July 10th, 1941.

I am sending a formal note with this letter to Mr. Langdon, asking him to sign the same on behalf of the Mark Twain Company, and then to mail the same to you thus extending the term of your contract to nine years from July 10th, 1941.

We recently had the privilege of having a preview of your motion picture on the life of Mark Twain, and I was simply more than delighted with it as was Mrs. Loomis, who is Mark Twain's niece. She sat beside me throughout the picture and constantly exclaimed over the perfection and beauty of its portrayals. You see the young Mr. Langdon, who was shown in the picture as Livy's brother, was the father of Mrs. Loomis, and also the father of Jervis Langdon so that it was of particular interest to Mrs. Loomis to see her father so happily pictured in some of the scenes of his early life.

1. There was just one bit of anachronism which I noted and that was in relation to the death of the Clemens boy. If you will recall the scene you will remember that just prior to the death of his child Mark went into a toy shop which had a name painted on the window showing it was in a Buffalo store. As a matter of fact the child died in Hartford, and, therefore, that bit of "local" is not correct.

June 7th, 1943.

2. One comparatively short scene I thought dragged a bit was that wherein some five minutes of time was devoted to the attempt to catch a frog in the pond. In some of this time I feel sure your audience would enjoy more negro spiritual singing. You have several short bits of such singing, and I think the picture could stand a little more. If you are going to cut any other spot I suggest that fog scene during the night on the Mississippi might be curtailed a bit.

3. In the early stages of the picture during Mark's boyhood and young manhood I thought the character talked a bit too fast for him; in other words, the drawl was hardly perceptible; whereas the drawl toward the end of the picture was more in evidence and was quite an exact portrayal of the Clemens's manner of speech. In other words, in the beginning of the picture he talked too fast and at the end he talked in typical Mark Twain style. We can see that in point of time if anything Mark "dragged" his words more as a young man than he did in later years after he had gotten away from the local influences of the South.

4. There is one epigram which I think you have gotten mixed and have mis-quoted Mark Twain. I think it is in the speech scene in India where you have Mark Twain get off that celebrated epigram: "The reason God created man was because he was disappointed in the monkey!" That is just as Mark Twain said it, and I always find it a bit dangerous to alter his exact words or try to improve upon them. Your picture gives the quotation as I recall to the effect that "God was disappointed in making man and he theroupon created the monkey", which is not nearly as effective.

5. There was just one spot which Mrs. Loomis thought was a bit disappointing and that was your prologue which she deemed depressing as it did not have enough sparkle to it - yet on the whole she was greatly pleased. She also noted that through the play both Mrs. Clemens and her father continuously addressed the principal character as "Mark". She said that Mr. Langdon, Sr. always called Mr. Clemens "Sam" and Livy, Sam's wife, never called him "Mark", but always addressed him as "Youth". As I recall it she only addressed him as "Youth" once in the entire film.

6. Among those also delighted with the presentation of the picture was Lyman Beecher Stowe, grandson of Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose brothers were Henry Ward Beecher and Thomas K. Beecher. The latter performed the wedding ceremony with Joseph H. Twitchell, of Hartford, assisting. The film states that Twitchell did the job, but this is not correct.

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky - # 3

June 7th, 1943.

The incident about "the news of my death has been greatly <sup>7</sup>exaggerated" was poorly told, not exactly quoted, and it is much too apt and effective as a phrase not to be made use of to the best possible advantage.

To make any criticism about the presentation of the picture as a whole seems like attempting to paint the lily, but I know you would want a candid opinion in the premises as to the reaction of those who knew Mark Twain well and are very familiar with his life history and habits, although on a whole it is a marvelous picture.

I feel sure the Academy Award is due you and your associates and wish to send you and your associates my heartiest congratulations on your achievement as a whole.

With best regards to you and Mrs. Lasky, I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Charles T. Lark)

43-119



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

June 10, 1943.

Friend Lark:

## THOUGHTS THROUGH SPACE!

I wrote Miss Starr last night, not having heard from you in quite some time - wondering if you might be laid up or something...and your letter arrives this morning!!

I am enclosing my check, as suggested, so matters can be expedited the moment Warners make payment. You are to deposit this check, made out to me for \$25,000.00 to Manufacturers Trust Company, 680 Columbus Avenue Branch, (93rd & Columbus) New York. I have a joint checking account - Harold M. and Martha F. Sherman.

I shall certainly be glad to get these things straightened out and the new agreement signed and out of the way so we can all forget about it. I only hope the success of the picture will overshadow everything with sweetness and light in due time - for I've never worked harder on anything in my life...and I know you've done your utmost at all times, too.

Please wire me the instant check is received and deposited to my account, so that I can act accordingly. I want to be sure this income tax business is properly figured out.

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

I've not yet seen the picture but am happy you are enthused, in the main, over it. Why they should have tried to rewrite Twain's sayings is beyond me! Best to you!

Act One

- Prologue: The Commentator
- Scene 1: The Parlor of the Langdon Home,  
Elmira, New York. A late afternoon,  
two days before Christmas.
- Interlude: The Commentator
- Scene 2: A Room in General Grant's Home,  
New York City, in the 1880's. Morning.
- Interlude: The Commentator
- Scene 3: Mark Twain's Study in his home at  
Hartford, Connecticut.  
Afternoon of the Same Day.

Act Two

- Scene 1: Same as Scene 2, Act I  
A Late Afternoon - Six Months Later.
- Scene 2: Same as Scene 3, Act I.  
Evening. Several Days Later.
- Interlude: The Commentator
- Scene 3: Same as Scene 3, Act I  
Afternoon - A Week Later.

Act Three

- Scene 1: The Lecture Tour
- Scene 2: The Twain Suite in the Langham Hotel,  
London, England.  
Evening.
- Interlude: The Commentator
- Scene 3: Backstage of the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford.
- Interlude: The Commentator
- Scene 4: Same as Scene 3, Act I.  
Afternoon, Some Years Later.
- Interlude: The Commentator
- Scene 5: The Bed Chamber of Mark Twain  
Late Afternoon of April 21st, 1910.

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

43-121

June 14th, 1943.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
550 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Ill.

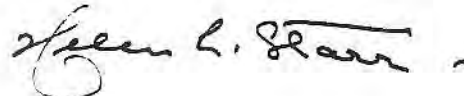
Dear Mr. Sherman:-

When I wrote you the other day I neglected to ask that you also kindly send a check drawn in Mr. Lark's favor for his share of the next check from Warner Brothers. You will recall they said they would mail it to Mr. Lark on the 10th. Of course, neither the Mark Twain check nor Mr. Lark's check will be deposited until after the check has cleared in your account, but Mr. Lark wants to have these matters all done before June 30th. I will let you know the date the check is put in your account, and what date I fill in on the checks to the Mark Twain Company and to Mr. Lark.

I am glad to know your radio program is proving such a success, and can well imagine how busy you must be answering letters, etc.

With best of wishes to you and Mrs. Sherman,

Sincerely yours,



(Helen L. Starr)

43-125



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

Where is page I?  
after June, 43

-2-

Jesse, your idea of a picture on "YOUR KEY TO HAPPINESS" is growing in my mind. Each day is adding new possible episodes - the most amazing human life stories coming in to me - in the form of questions to be answered over the air.

I am now on the radio SEN times a week - Mondays, through Fridays, 6:45 to 7, and Sunday evenings, a full half hour, 6:30 to 7. I am getting many requests for personal interviews and the auditorium and private office in the Goldblatt Brothers' State Street Store are almost completed. Public interest is rapidly increasing - and I'll be delighted to talk this whole matter over with you when you are next through Chicago.

Any more word on "MARK TWAIN"? The Goldblatt brothers would like to see a showing of the picture and make plans with you people to publicize it on the air - and through their own stores - and tie in with re through feature columns and stories when the time comes. When do you suppose a print will be in Chicago for that purpose?

Please give our best to Bessie and accept the same cordial regards for yourself!

Sincerely,

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

43126  
FINE

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

June 16th, 1943

Dear Harold:

It was nice to receive your letter enclosing the letter from Louis Zara.

The script on "Audubon" is already well along; it is being written by Elliot Paul, author of "The Last Time I Saw Paris" and "The Life and Death of a Spanish Town" - in collaboration with Donald Culross Peattie, who wrote "Singing in the Wilderness" on which our story is based, and who also is the author of "Audubon's America" which material we also own.

If things do not pan out, with my present setup, we might be able to avail ourselves of the services of Louis Zara. I will keep you posted.

Was glad to hear that you are keeping in mind "Your Key to Happiness" for a picture. There is no particular rush for you to do this story, but when you do get around to it, you may be sure I will study it with the keenest interest.

You will be interested to know that Charles T. Lark saw "Mark Twain" in the Warner Bros. projection room in New York, and was most enthusiastic about it - he called it a truly great picture. The release date is far off and, for that reason, I don't think there will be a print in Chicago for a few months. When a print does reach Chicago, I will arrange for you to see it.

With kind regards to you and Mrs. Sherman, I am

As ever,





43-129

274K

CHARLES TRESSLER LARK  
COUNSELLOR AT LAW

527 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY

June 18th, 1943.

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Harold:-

I phoned you today, but you were out and then talked to Mrs. Sherman telling her I had the check for \$25,000. and would deposit the same to the credit of your account with the Manufacturers' Trust Company. I am enclosing herewith duplicate deposit slip. I will not put in the check in favor of the Mark Twain Company until Tuesday or next week. In the meantime, if you have not already done so, will you please send me check in my favor for my share, which I figure to be \$7,000.

The settlement agreement with Clara is about whipped into shape, and I expect the final draft will be ready in a day or two.

I have not heard anything further from Howard Kyle, so perhaps he realizes he has no claim.

Warner Brothers are putting on another screening of The Adventures of Mark Twain on June 22nd, at 2.45 in the new projection-room in their building at 321 West 44th Street, New York City, so if you happen to be here then you could see it, although I suppose that is out of the question as far as your being able to be here.

With every good wish to you and Mrs. Sherman,  
I am,

Yours faithfully,



(Charles T. Lark)

43-130



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

June 18, 1943.

Friend Lask:

As per instructions received by Mrs. Sherman, I am herewith sending you my check made out to you for \$7,000.00, the consideration due you for your share of our collaboration and for your splendid services rendered in the preparation of the Mark Twain screen treatment, resulting in the screen production, "The Adventures of Mark Twain", produced by Jesse L. Lasky for Warner Brothers, and to be released this fall.

I understand that the contract difficulties with Clara Gabrielowitsch are expected to be cleared up in a few days and I will be glad to have this matter settled.

Your attitude has been fine throughout and, despite this unpleasant development, it has been a thrill and a pleasure to work with you on this enterprise.

My best wishes to you and yours - and please advise me of the details in connection with this transaction. I understand the \$95,000 check, made out to me by Warners, was deposited to my Manufacturers Trust account today!

Sincerely,

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

July 31st. Enrolite home  
 from Plewes  
 Dear Mrs Sherman, - I have been  
 intending to write you in this but  
 have been moving about lately just  
 returning from Plewes.

Betty has told me of your dear  
 care of her while in Chicago and  
 I do want you to know what it  
 has meant to have you "mother"  
 her during these difficult times.  
 She is extremely sensitive and nu-  
 worldly from a point of view of  
 the masses, and I am always afraid  
 she will suffer when she is enroute  
 to her husband - Your graciousness  
 and helpfulness is just what she  
 has needed and she always tells  
 me in great detail and gratefulness  
 of your meetings - I know how  
 very much I appreciate it all -  
 I know you and your husband  
 are going to be satisfied with  
 "Mark Twain" - It really shaped  
 itself into a fine characterization  
 of a true American and writer -  
 I hope you can see it privately  
 real soon and shall be eager for  
 your reactions.

I owe Mrs Sherman a letter and  
 intend to write him also.

I am truly glad he is able to give out his teaching and know he must be helping many hungry souls. As I look into the faces of those who are in service and their followers at stations and on trains and every where I am amazed at their complete emptiness to real values. They seem frustrated within themselves utterly "Cognizant" of the fact that they are alive and living for a higher thought and development. They seem particularly at this time lost souls to God and blind to life itself. Can one ever awaken them or wonder!! They certainly need help. I am always so happy to hear from your husband as I have felt in great sympathy with him during and since the picture having had several deep and illuminating talks.

My work goes on and I live to express beauty which is at this time rather a difficult order. However it is good to be alive and to see with those unseen eyes and to feel with our soul all the beauties of this earth. My deep affection to you both  
Sincerely  
Dorothy Lasky

43-163

78



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

August 8, 1945.

Dear Mr. Langdon:

I am so glad that this long involved matter is finally to be settled.

It is regrettable that Clara feels she has had to act as she did. Had she come to us, in a friendly and not an accusing spirit, I am sure we would have listened just as considerately to her complaints and treated her just as fairly...but she has preferred to engage in the costly business of hiring lawyers...and I only hope her Estate may be watched with the care you, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Lark have given it in the past. Clara still does not seem to realize what has been done for her and the value of the properties owned by her father, through wise handling, through the years.

I believe THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN, when it appears on the screens of the country, will demonstrate to her that it was in good hands and competently treated in every manner. Everywhere I have gone, I hear from writers and others that the Mark Twain Estate is extolled as the example of the most successfully managed author's estate in America. From my association with this Estate, I would say that it deserves this fine reputation.

Should you ever be journeying through Chicago - please let me know, that I may enjoy a visit with you. Sincerely -



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

43-165

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD (25)

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, Inc.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

277B

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

August 9th, 1943

*Miss Lasky and Sherman*

Mr. Dale O'Brien,  
Publicity Director,  
WGN, Inc. 444 No. Michigan Avenue,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. O'Brien:

Thank you for sending me  
the photograph showing Harold Sherman's billing -  
and please tell Harold I was glad to receive it.

Yours sincerely,

*Jesse L. Lasky*

VITAPHONE

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

43-182 I

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

September 22nd, 1943

Dear Harold:

Among a large batch of letters which I have been unable to answer due to the pressure brought about by the production of "Rhapsody in Blue", my George Gershwin picture, I find I neglected to answer two letters from you written almost a month ago. Kindly pardon this apparent negligence -- I know you understand.

The latest news on "Mark Twain" is that the picture will probably be released in February and handled as a roadshow. This means that the returns will be substantial as when pictures are handled as roadshows, they get a very large gross. I want you to know that when the first print reaches Chicago, I will see that it is shown to you, but this may not occur for a couple of months. The reason for the delay is that this company has many other pictures that, for one reason or another, they want to release ahead of "Mark Twain" - and, as pictures are now consuming two or three times their normal playing time, this has resulted in setting back the starting dates of many finished pictures, among them "Mark Twain".

Bessie showed me the articles you sent her in connection with your radio program "Your Key to Happiness". I read two of them last night and think they are very fine. I will read the rest of the articles very soon.

I notice that you are terminating your arrangement with Goldblatt Bros. and may have a new sponsor with a National hookup. I hope you can work this out, as the program would naturally be more effective on a National hookup.

Regarding a picture based on this subject - "Your Key to Happiness" - I am not in a position to discuss it or give it any thought at this time. A treatment would have to be prepared by you and submitted to me before we could get any action. I realize that you are too busy to undertake this work now, but the subject is always good and it can wait until the time when you can get around to it.

I will be working on my Gershwin picture until November and hardly expect to do anything with "Audubon" until next year, along about March or April. The company would not take

VITAPHONE

an option on an idea like "Your Key to Happiness" unless you first submitted a preliminary treatment and as I am so tied up for the next six months, there is no necessity for your undertaking the treatment until your own affairs permit you to spend the proper time in preparing it.

I trust the above has clarified the situation and answered the questions contained in your recent letters.

It is likely that Bessie will be taking a trip to New York the end of October in which event I will advise you, as I know she will want to see you and Mrs. Sherman when she goes through Chicago.

With kindest regards to you both, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be "James I.", written in dark ink.



JERVIS LANGDON  
ELMIRA, N. Y.

September 28, 1943

43 ~~187~~ 187

Mr. Harold L. Sherman,  
The Cambridge,  
880 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

I have been a long time answering your nice letter of August 8, but it was not because the letter was not appreciated. I do not agree with you that Clara Gabrilowitsch could have handled her grievance very differently and to much better advantage.

Charles Lark and I did not get through until August 25 when our final accounts and our resignations were accepted. Clara's Los Angeles attorney, Harnagel, kept trying to introduce into the agreement, which you, Lark and the Park Train Co. were willing to make with Clara, new ideas, including insults to Lark of one kind or another which we declined to accept. Finally we finished on our own terms.

I saw the new film in New York a couple of months ago and believe it will be a success. There are of course some wanderings from the path of fact, some license taken that I wish could have been avoided. There are some small errors in the text which Clara could easily have spotted and amended if she had been willing to play the game. But as I survey the past two years and all the unpleasantness of it I am convinced that in spite of what Clara says, the trouble is her dissatisfaction with the financial return from this picture. She never got over the disappointment of not being made a high salaried official in the making of the picture, and in the light of perspective I regret now that Lark was so polite and thoughtful as not to put before Clara more frankly Mr. Lesky's attitude as he and later you have given it to me.

Well, it is over now and I hope for all concerned the picture will be a tremendous success financially as well as otherwise and that the new trustees and officers of the Park Train Co., when they get the latter, will handle the property to Clara's satisfaction. They never can again make the money for the Estate that Lark has made. He could not repeat it under present conditions, but they will have a hard time doing as well as he would do if in the saddle.

Hoping to see you again sometime (I shall look you up if I come to Chicago), and with warm regards, I beg to remain,

P.S.

A letter from Mrs. Harrington  
of mid summer said  
Clara was fully recovered  
from operation & very well.

Yours very truly,

Jervis Langdon

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

43-189

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

September 29th, 1943

Dear Harold:

Ever since I received your wire regarding your doing a novelization of "Adventures of Mark Twain", I have been trying to arrange for cooperation from this company. Finally the matter was placed in Mr. Mort Blumenstock's hands, and I have already wired you to contact him. Blumenstock is head of advertising and publicity and will be helpful no doubt in many ways; at any rate, this is the way the company functions in all matters such as novelization of pictures that tend to exploit current productions.

Under separate cover, I am forwarding you a copy of "Adventures of Mark Twain" script and, in a few days, will send you some selected stills.

If you have not already communicated with Mort Blumenstock, simply tell him that Charles Einfeld instructed me to have you contact him with reference to your doing a novelization of our picture and to get his cooperation.

I trust you will pardon the delay in answering you, but it had to go through the Warner Bros. routine.

With kindest regards -

As ever,



Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill.

VITAPHONE

43-198

PHONE LAKEVIEW 6401



*The Cambridge*  
APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

October 14, 1943.

Dear Mr. Langdon:

I much appreciated your fine letter of September 28th, giving me a report on what you and Mr. Lark have been through and I rejoice with you that the matter has finally been settled.

Because Mrs. Sherman and I had become so fond of Clara - recognizing at the same time her emotional tendencies - this unpleasantness has occasioned heartache for us. We sent her a Christmas greeting as usual last year but, of course, had no acknowledgement.

Your deduction is very accurate about the main cause of Clara's dissension. It stems from her not being able to get herself made a "producing supervisor" on the picture because she considers herself to be an authority on the theatre. She told me how she had produced plays in Detroit. I spoke with a man in New York who had been her stage manager and he said, "Sherman, they were God-awful, and a source of great embarrassment to her husband. But she didn't seem to realize how bad her acting was - and the play...she thought everything was wonderful!"

My position in Hollywood was a difficult one because Clara constantly wanted to have more to do with things. However, I kept counseling her to wait until the screen play was completed before making her suggestions because I knew Lasky didn't want interference and have to spend hours of time listening to well-meant suggestions which could have nothing to do with the dramatic structure of the story. I think Clara resented being kept this far away from activities, although Lasky was



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

-2-

most gracious and considerate, and after I had finished and left Hollywood, he went to Clara's home, with Alan LeMay, the other writer on the production, and went over the script with her. So, you see, she was not disregarded, because changes were made after that, before the final shooting script was okayed.

I am glad, in the main, that you can approve of the picture which I, myself, have not yet seen. Lasky has promised to give me a showing as soon as a print reaches Chicago. With reference to several errors which Clara might have spotted - she was given her chance, at the time above mentioned, to go over the script and make her suggestions... so, if she did not catch these errors she has no one to blame but herself.

I concur with you that no one will ever handle the Estate in the efficient, and loving manner in which it was managed by Mr. Lark - and yourself. You both had every reason to consider this obligation a duty of heart as well as head...but human appreciation is a variable...and Clara will have to learn, at her age, through bitter experience, I am a fraid.

It would be a joy to see you if and when you come through Chicago. I have just completed a six months' series of broadcasts in my personal philosophy program based upon my book, "Your Key to Happiness" which has kept me enormously busy answering thousands of letters on personal problems sent in to me, running the gamut of human experience. Incidentally, if you do not have a copy of this book, I wish you would let me send it to you. The enclosed circular will give you an idea of it. My best wishes and thanks for your kindnesses...Sincerely.



SHERMAN - LASKY

204A

October 14, 1943

AIR MAIL

43-199

Mr. Jesse L. Lasky  
Warner Brothers  
Burbank, California

Dear Jesse:

Thank you for the splendid cooperation you have given in sending me a copy of the screen play on the "Adventures of Mark Twain" and also the set of stills which I received yesterday.

I wrote to my former publishers, Grosset & Dunlap, who have published over thirty books of mine and who, as you know, have brought out most of the motion picture versions of stories. To my surprise I learned that Harper Brothers had already made arrangements to reprint, through them, "Boy's Life of Mark Twain" and tie it in with the picture. I wrote back immediately to Grosset & Dunlap and told them that I thought this not prove effective and while, of course, they would sell a certain number of books on the picture's publicity, such an edition could not in any way be representative of the "Adventures of Mark Twain."

I believe that Grosset & Dunlap would like me to do this novelization but Harper's have decided to hold them to their contract because they own the rights on this "Boy's Life of Mark Twain" and are anxious to get a re-publication. Grosset & Dunlap, on the other hand, if permitted their say-so would probably have liked to rearrange their plans and take my novelization of the picture story in a tieup with Harper's. I took the matter up with Mr. Lark and talked to him last night by long distance phone. Mr. Lark said he had been in conference with Harper's who are jealously guarding their book rights and who have now decided to change the title of their forthcoming reprint from, "Boy's Life of Mark Twain," to "The Adventures of Mark Twain."

Now, Jesse, I don't want to be placed in the middle on this but I do think that here is where you should step in. Harper's undoubtedly have the right to reprint any of their books on Mark Twain but it seems to me you certainly are entitled to the



exclusive right on the use of the title originated by you, "Adventures of Mark Twain." I think this will result in a sale of this book under false pretenses inasmuch as purchasers will think they are buying the story largely as presented on the screen, and Harper's would be selling their book on your title, using it for commercial purposes. According to Mr. Lark, Harper's said they would contest any novelization published in book form of "Adventures of Mark Twain." Frankly, they have always been an ultra-conservative group and never displayed any enthusiasm toward my ambition of dramatizing the life of Twain. It was since their executives saw a special showing of the picture that they suddenly awakened to the realization they were "missing a bet" and rushed to Grosset & Dunlap with the proposal to get out this book.

I do not pretend to know your legal rights but if Harper's are able to prevent a book's being published, I am sure they cannot prevent us from writing a story of book length which might be serialized in one of the big national magazines. While you or your firm would probably not object to the use of the title, "Adventures of Mark Twain" for purposes of non-profit in any way which would afford good publicity for your picture, it would seem to me that you would jealously protect your title on any unauthorized uses of it, such as I presume this present planned usage to be.

Until this matter be straightened out and I could see a clear course of procedure ahead, I have not communicated with Mort Blumenstock in New York. When I wired you, I felt that you were the one from whom I would have to get permission to novelize this story and, without knowing the law, I should think an arrangement with you would be all that was necessary. Perhaps you can throw some light on this situation from your end. With the years of research I have put in on this subject, I could prepare a most exciting and inspiring story. I have had this in mind for some time but until recently have been too busy to give real thought to it. I am sure some other publisher could be interested in handling this book if it would be possible to get it out without conflict with Harper's and if they can be prevented from using your title on a book which does not deserve to be so named.

Please do not involve me directly in this, but I felt you should know exactly what has happened and should be guided accordingly.

Thank you for your further comments with relation to my contemplated "Your Key to Happiness" story and your advises as to when the "Mark Twain" picture will be released. This would give me time to get the novelization done and on the market in some form if this matter can be cleared up.

My best wishes as always.

Sincerely,

HMS/m

43-205

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

October 20th, 1943

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

Dear Harold:

Answering your letter of October 14th - I think you should drop the matter of doing a book on "The Adventures of Mark Twain". We do not control the right to publish a book based on our picture, consequently, there is nothing we could do to help you in this situation. We are not particularly concerned about Harper's naming their book "The Adventures of Mark Twain"; as a matter of fact, even though the story is not similar to our picture, the Publicity Department think it would be a good tie-up -- so I say, let's drop it.

By the way, Bessie is leaving for New York on November 10th, arriving in Chicago on the Santa Fe "Chief", Friday, November 12th - and it occurred to me that maybe you or Mrs. Sherman would be kind enough to meet her at the Santa Fe station, and have lunch together before she leaves for New York.

You will be interested in knowing "Rhapsody in Blue" is nearing completion and looks like a magnificent picture.

With kindest regards to you and Mrs. Sherman -

As ever,



Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge Apartment Hotel,  
530 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill.

VITAPHONE



43-206

288



# The Cambridge

APARTMENT HOTEL

530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

October 25, 1943.

Dear Jesse:

All right - we'll drop the idea of the novelization - unless Harpers and Grosset & Dunlap should change their minds, which is not likely, with arrangements already made. I should have loved to do the story.

I note that dramatized versions of picture stories are now being done, according to Variety. Some day I should like to do my play on "Twain". I believe the play would not conflict with the picture and one would stimulate interest in the other.

We'll be delighted to meet Bessie and have her as our guest for lunch on November 12th. Can you tell us when her train will arrive?

Congratulations on "Rhapsody in Blue". I had a hunch that should be a great picture.

Don't forget your suggestion of YOUR KEY TO HAPPINESS and when your mind is free to think about it - let me know and I'll get busy. I am formulating ideas now and have gathered some remarkable material. By the time you are ready, I have reason to believe I'll be on a nationwide network.

Our best to Bessie and yourself.

Sincerely,



530 DIVERSEY PARKWAY  
CHICAGO

43-234

2890

ONE EIGHTY-ONE NORTH SALT AIR AVENUE  
BRENTWOOD, WEST LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Just a  
line  
+ excuse

Dear Friend,

I shall be coming thru  
on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Jess has written  
you so I hope we can chat  
between trains. Your letter  
was so dear and our friends  
goes on thru all. I'm so  
glad you sent the talks.

They have a real place, and  
your worthy service to human-  
ity is gratifying and at this  
time sorely needed.

We will talk about that  
much needed film - You  
are the one to do it!

Excuse haste until next  
week best to Martha  
Sincerely,  
Phosky.

43-241

290

December 24, 1943.

Dear Mr. Langdon:

This source is not to be quoted, but I had a two hour conversation with Bessie Lasky last week, between trains, as she was enroute back to the coast from a trip to New York.

Mrs. Lasky told me that Clara is going with a Russian gentleman, whom we met at her home one afternoon for tea. This man, whose name she could not recall, and it has slipped our memory also, is ambitious to marry her - and is even now exerting quite an influence in her affairs. Mrs. Lasky feels that he has been largely responsible for getting her stirred up. Our impression of him was that he was a cool, reserved, shrewd and calculating gentleman. He knows all the nice European manners and Clara was looking to him for his opinions on matters. He professed to have an interest in the research work I had been doing with respect to the higher powers of mind - but I could not feel that his interest was sincere. I believe he has been passing judgment on Clara's friends under the guise of "protecting" her. This is most unfortunate if Mrs. Lasky's report is true - and it seems logical to us from our own observation.

I still have not seen a showing of the picture although it has been promised. I am reassured at the reports which have come in, however - and believe all was done that could have been done, under the circumstances, to make it a good picture and a success. As you perhaps know, Warners are planning to open it on a road show basis - which means much bigger money returns.

I hope this finds you in good health. My warmest good wishes to you and yours!  
Sincerely-

43-242

290A

December 24, 1943.

Dear Bessie: [ Lasky ]

It was so nice to have had the fine visit with you and Betty - and to have met Buddy. He is a wonderful person and I think Betty is to be congratulated anew.

I had the pleasure of spending the following Sunday morning with Buddy at the Sherman Hotel (nice of him to pick a hotel by the same name!). He has such a fine understanding and appreciation of Betty and is so deeply in love with her that I am sure everything is going to be better and better as they travel the road of life together.

Buddy read several chapters of my new book, "Your Key to Married Happiness", he having requested me to bring the manuscript. Apparently your recommendation had made him keen to see it. He said that this was HIS philosophy of married life - and he would very much like to have had Betty read it also.

If Buddy has been able to make it for the Christmas holidays - please give he and Betty our best wishes and thank them for the greeting they sent.

I am still waiting eagerly to see THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN - and hope Warners may give me a holiday season's gift of a showing!

Please forgive me for not having written sooner but I have been swamped with work which had to be out of the way before Christmas. Our best wishes to you and Jesse - and our hope that the New Year contains much happiness for you both!

Sincerely,

43-243  
290AA

JERVIS LANGDON  
ELMIRA, N. Y.

December 27, 1943.

My dear Mr. Sherman:

It was very nice to receive your Christmas remembrance, and I particularly appreciated your letter.

I have not known anything about the moving picture but had expected to read of its release about this time. I suppose you mean by a "road show basis" that it will appear in the big cities, a few of them at a time, on a high price basis and later on go to the public at regular prices. I should think that would be quite a test of its popularity with the public. If the public doesn't think this picture in the same class as others that have been launched in this way it might give it a bad start. Well, that is up to Warners.

I was particularly interested of course in what you told me of my cousin. I am sorry to say that I am entirely out of touch with her, though I did get a Christmas card from her. I only know that the new trustees and officers of the Mark Twain Co. have not had an easy time getting things under way or understanding some of the Mark Twain Co. contracts etc., and that they have leaned very heavily on Charles Lark who has been good enough to help them all he possibly could. I only hope the friend you mention is what you call him, a "gentleman" and that he will not succeed in his quest. Some one certainly defeated me in my efforts to have my cousin see things as they were. On the whole I think I would rather meet ~~the~~ defeat at the hands of the medium than even a Russian gentleman, but I am past the strong feelings that I had for many months on that subject. Needless to say I shall be very interested to hear further news of any kind if it comes to you from Hollywood.

I have not been in Chicago now for several years, although in normal times I would have been there to see a friend of mine. If and when such a visit takes place I shall certainly try to see you. Meantime many thanks for your letter and Christmas card.

Yours sincerely,

*Jervis Langdon*

Mr. Harold M. Sherman,  
The Cambridge,  
530 Diversey Parkway,  
Chicago.

CABLE ADDRESS  
"WANEWAR"

43-244

TELEPHONE  
HOLLYWOOD 1251

290AAA

**WARNER BROS.**  
PICTURES, INC.  
WEST COAST STUDIOS  
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF  
JESSE L. LASKY

December 28th, 1943

Dear Harold:

In wishing you a Happy New Year, I want to take this opportunity to thank you and Mrs. Sherman for you many kindnesses to Bessie and Betty; also, for the talk I understand you had with Buddy. Bessie has grown very fond of you and speaks of you often.

I noticed in a recent letter from you that you have been promised a showing of Twain. I didn't know a print had been sent to Chicago. If you have not seen it, I will check up and see if I can arrange a showing for you.

You will be surprised to learn that we had to stop our picture "Hollywood Canteen" due to the fact that we got in trouble with the Screen Actors Guild. We had planned to use about forty stars and personalities, paying their salaries on a prorated basis, but the Guild passed a ruling that we would have to pay the big stars full salaries, even though they worked only one day. This, of course, put the stars beyond our reach and, as we could not make the picture without them, we stopped the production after shooting a couple of weeks. I am now looking for a new story, although I will probably decide to go ahead with "Audubon".

"Rhapsody in Blue" is finished and is now being scored, so that it probably will be previewed sometime in February.

My son, Jesse, Jr. was with the American forces that landed on the beach at Arawe recently, and received considerable publicity in the newspapers due to a dispatch sent from General MacArthur's headquarters. I am very proud of the boy.

That's about all the news - but I did want to send New Year's Greetings to you and your family and that gave me an excuse to drop you these few lines.

With warmest regards -

As ever,



VITAPHONE  
REG. TRADE MARK

43-139

274 L(5)

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY  
CHICAGO CAMPUS  
LAKE SHORE DRIVE AND CHICAGO AVENUE  
CHICAGO

*Re Lasky radio interview  
made Tuesday previous  
April 1943*

MEDILL SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM  
WIEBOLDT HALL

Saturday morning

Dear Mr. Lasky:

Herewith your copy of our script for today, as complete as I am able to make it. Please pardon the rough typing -- I had to do it myself, as I have no secretary on Saturday mornings. I am enclosing your original script, so that you can check the very small departures which I have made from it. I have made identical copies for Mr. Meine and myself.

I want to say again how thoroughly I like the script which you and Mr. Sherman have worked out. It more than meets my expectations in every way, and I know that we are going to have a fine broadcast.

I look forward to meeting you at Studio 2, in the North Wrigley Building, at 12:30.

Cordially,

*Alvin T. Friedman*

FREDERICK:

This afternoon "Of Men and Books" is not reviewing a book - it is reviewing a motion picture, "The Adventures of Mark Twain". I have as my guest in the studio the Producer of that picture. He is JESSE L. LASKY. Mr. Lasky is perhaps the most outstanding pioneer picture producer in America. He has been responsible for more than one thousand pictures, many of them dealing with great epochs of American history. Mr. Lasky conceived and produced "The Covered Wagon" which is still listed as one of the ten great motion pictures of all time. Mr. Lasky carried on the American tradition when he recently produced "The Life of Sergeant York" which vividly portrayed the spirit of our American boys of the First World War. And now Mr. Lasky is enroute to New York where he is to attend the world premiere of his latest picture "The Adventures of Mark Twain", starring Fredric March as the immortal Twain.

Mr. Lasky - you apparently believe that motion pictures bear a responsibility to the American public in the nature of the stories brought to the screen.

LASKY:

Indeed I do, Mr. Frederick. In earlier days motion picture producers were not so conscious of this responsibility as they are today, but now the industry realizes the great part it is destined to play, and is playing in the shaping of American thought and life and character. We are constantly striving to bring to the people of our country the finest in inspiration and drama that this world affords.

FREDERICK:

But I notice, Mr. Lasky, that you, personally, have been most interested in bringing to the American people an appreciation of their own real life characters and the great and wonderful possibilities inherent in our country and our form of government.

LASKY:

Yes, Mr. Frederick, in times such as these, I believe that no greater service can be rendered than bringing to all Americans a finer appreciation of the true spirit of <sup>our</sup> ~~the~~ country as personified in the lives of



its outstanding men and women.

FREDERICK:

Then this is the real reason, Mr. Lasky, why you are bringing the life of Mark Twain to the screen.

LASKY:

Indeed it is! Producing "Mark Twain" has been a dream of mine since I visited Pall Mall, Tennessee, some years ago, <sup>I was there</sup> doing research on the life of Sergeant York. They told me there of an old native who knew Sergeant York as a boy - and also his father and grandfather. They said, "If you can get this old mountaineer to talk about York, you will get all the information you need." I had friends bring this old man to the little wooden hotel where I was staying, which, oddly enough, was named "The Mark Twain". I began asking the old fellow questions about York. "Alvin York were a good boy", he said, "but, Mr. Lasky, what are the name of this hotel where you're stoppin'?" "The Mark Twain", I told him. "Oh, yes", said he, "that Mark Twain - he'll make a wonderful picture - and I could tell you more about him than's written in the books. His father build this hotel." "That's interesting" said I, "but getting back to Sergeant York!" "Yep, Alvin's a good boy", he said -- "but, Mark Twain, he were a great man." And, for the rest of the interview, every time I asked a question about Alvin York, he would reply with an anecdote about Mark Twain. When I finally took leave of my Tennessee friends, who had gathered to bid me farewell, they shouted after me: "Good luck on Alvin York's picture"-- but high above their voices sounded the voice of the old mountaineer: "Mark Twain will make a great picture." In the plane that night, in spite of my interest in Sergeant York, the old man's phrase kept buzzing in my brain, until I fell asleep ..... "Mark Twain'll make a great picture -- Mark Twain'll make a great picture --- a great picture --- a great picture."

FREDERICK:

Then it might be said, Mr. Lasky, that this old mountaineer almost hypnotized you into making "Mark Twain".

LASKY:

Well, he certainly helped because, since a boy, I had come under the spell of Mark Twain's wonderful humorous and philosophic writings. As a matter of fact, I produced the original "Tom Sawyer", "Huckleberry Finn", "Prince and the Pauper" and "Puddin' Head Wilson".

FREDERICK:

Well, that background has surely qualified you to produce "The Adventures of Mark Twain". . . . . You know, Mr. Lasky, when Mr. Franklin J. Meine, Vice President of The Mark Twain Association of America (who is in the studio with us today), and I, saw the special preview of your Mark Twain picture, we were afraid that Mark Twain's personality might be too colorful to bring believably to the screen. We knew you had a great subject for a picture, but we hardly dared believe you could bring Mark Twain to us in such a manner as to make us feel that we were once again in the actual living presence of America's great humorist. However, Mr. Meine and I are prepared to state now that this miracle was accomplished . . . . But this must have been your greatest problem.

LASKY:

It certainly was, Mr. Frederick. And the first part of this problem was securing the right actor to play Mark Twain. We were most fortunate in our choice of Fredric March, whom critics say has given perhaps the finest portrayal of a real life character ever seen on the screen. By the way, he was greatly helped in his characterization by studying an old silent movie which Thomas Edison had taken of Mark Twain in 1905. It showed Mark walking in front of his home in Elmira, New York - dressed in his famous white suit - greeting his three daughters, Jean, Susy and Clara. Freddie March had this picture run over and over at least a hundred times and imitated Mark Twain's every gesture, down to his

shuffling gait and even the way he puffed his cigar. Since we tell the story of Mark Twain from the time he was born until the time he died in the year that Halley's Comet appeared in the sky, it was necessary for Fredric March to use twelve different makeups. He had to arrive at the studio at six-thirty in the morning in order to be made up and ready to go before the cameras at nine o'clock. I think as you view the picture you'll agree Mark Twain's transition from youth to old age has been done so gradually, in keeping with actual photographs of Twain at different ages, that you are hardly aware he is growing old before your very eyes.

FREDERICK:

That is true, Mr.Lasky. Of course, I realize you had to take some poetic license in a story of his life, but I was impressed at the little departure you took from real facts.

LASKY:

Well, you must remember, Mr.Frederick, that the Mark Twain Estate gave us access to all the published and unpublished works of Mark Twain. We obtained the rights to Albert Bigelow Paine's official three-volume biography; to scores of Twain's letters and note-books, in addition to Harold Sherman's stage play on Mark Twain - and we consulted Bernard DeVoto, and other authorities, who knew the Twain background. When we had collected all our material, we went to work on the motion picture script. Our first scenario would probably have produced a picture six hours in length. It broke our hearts to have to cut it down - but we did our best to present the Mark Twain that America knows and loves.

FREDERICK:

And that you have done, Mr.Lasky. Perhaps right now you would be interested in hearing what Mr.Meine and myself really think of "The Adventures of Mark Twain".

LASKY:

I certainly would.

FREDERICK: Mr. Meine, you know, is not only Vice President of The Mark Twain Association of America - but he is a real authority on "Mark Twainiana". You may find him critical on some points.

LASKY: You gentlemen go right ahead. Don't pull any punches. I want to hear exactly what you think of the picture.

FREDERICK: Well then, here goes .....

CLOSING LINE FOR LASKY FOLLOWING MEINE-FREDERICK INTERVIEW

FREDERICK: Well, Mr. Lasky, now you've heard what Mr. Meine and I had to say about "The Adventures of Mark Twain". This is the first time a picture has ever been reviewed on our "Of Men and Books" program. I think it is only fair that you should be permitted the last word.

LASKY: Thank you, Mr. Frederick. Since this is essentially a book review program, I think I should quote a remark that Mark Twain made about his books which I would like to have apply to the picture also.

FREDERICK: What remark is that?

LASKY: Mark Twain said; "My books are water - those of great geniuses are wine - but - everybody drinks water!"

FREDERICK: Yes, Mr. Lasky - Mark Twain was right -- everybody drinks water and everybody, I am sure, is going to like "The Adventures of Mark Twain".