

SAM CLEMENS' HANNIBAL,  
1836 - 1838

DONALD H. WELSH

In June, 1835, John M. Clemens arrived with his family and Jennie, the housemaid, in the little frontier village of Florida, Missouri, where they were met and greeted by their kinspeople. Here only a few months later, on November 30, 1835, Mrs. Clemens gave birth to the son, Samuel Langhorne, who would become one of the greatest of American literary figures and achieve international renown as Mark Twain.

Due to a series of financial reverses the family remained in Florida only until November, 1839, when it moved 30 miles overland to Hannibal, a town that promised the rosy future which Florida had not provided.

Hannibal, which was platted in 1819 and saw its first frame house built about 1830 and its first brick house in 1832 or 1833, grew very slowly during its early years, and in 1833 its population numbered only about 50. By 1837 it had increased to 400 or 500, and census figures for 1840, the year after the arrival of the Clemens family, credit it with 1,034 people.<sup>1</sup>

Young Sam Clemens lived in Hannibal during one of the most formative periods of his life; he arrived at the age of four and remained until 1853, when he was 18. His recollections of these years provided a storehouse filled with memories from which he drew liberally during his literary career.

The old newspapers provide a fine picture of Hannibal, and to acquire this view of the town that Sam Clemens knew I have selected for careful examination the earliest period for which complete files of two contemporary newspapers exist, November, 1846, to June, 1848, the 18 months following Sam's eleventh birthday. These months saw an important change in the young Clemens' life when, due to the death of his father on March 24, 1847, Sam began the metamorphosis from a carefree lad into a printer's apprentice. During these months the people of Hannibal read the Hannibal Gazette, the city's first Democratic paper, published by H. D. La Cossitt, and the Hannibal Journal, a Whig paper issued by J. S. Buchanan.

In 1847 the Gazette discussed Hannibal and its prospects with great enthusiasm. Estimating the population at 3,000, the editor stated that "everything had a strangely new appearance" as nearly all the buildings had been erected within the last six years. Due to Hannibal's rapid growth, "Already, buildings of no ordinary kind, of no mean design, dot the entire valley, and begin to crown the high bluffs which surround her, as a bulwark. The tall

square-topped three and four story brick business house towers up here and there--the columned portico, and frescoed front of the private dwelling tell of a classic taste and liberality. Viewing the City from the river, the buildings rise one above another, up the ascent, having an appearance of compactness and extent, which vanishes as you look down from some of the over-topping hills around, and the intermediate unoccupied lots are revealed, showing room for quadrupling the present population without disturbing the repose of the hills."<sup>2</sup>

The building boom was especially evident in South Hannibal, which lay south of Bear Creek, where new construction in 1846 included a Baptist Church, two slaughterhouses, a three-story brick business house, 45 other buildings, and a bridge across Bear Creek.<sup>3</sup>

Among the new buildings in 1847 were "a number of fine brick residences . . . of a style of architectural taste which does credit to the proprietors," including 15 or 20 houses in South Hannibal, two brick churches (Reformed and Old School Presbyterian), a packing plant, and a "large stone Brewery."<sup>4</sup>

Much of this activity was due to Hannibal's rapid growth as a river port which handled the business of the surrounding area. The Gazette noted in 1847 that "There is a good wharf, of considerable extent--upon which the steamer discharges her cargo of imports. The space between the wharf and the buildings is near two hundred feet--the buildings are good, and adapted in size and character for 'storage and commission.'"<sup>5</sup>

During the 1846 season the wharves handled 1,080 steamboat arrivals and exports valued at \$1,200,000. Produce marketed at and shipped from Hannibal in the six months prior to March 1, 1847, included 110,000 bushels of wheat, 200 tons of hemp, and 400,000 pounds of tobacco. Among commodity prices at this time were wheat, 55-70¢ per bushel; hemp, \$2.75-\$3.00 per hundredweight; tobacco, \$1.50-\$2.50 a hundredweight; bacon, 4 1/2-5¢ per pound; butter, 10-12 1/2¢ per pound; and eggs, 5-6 1/4¢ per dozen.<sup>6</sup>

In summer months a regular packet service between St. Louis and Keokuk provided Hannibal with six upstream and six downstream mail and passenger boats weekly.<sup>7</sup> A favorite on this run was the Ocean Wave, and the Gazette editor commented on its service: "We always feel at home when we tread the planks of the favorite 'Wave'--and who does not? Every officer on board of her is a gentleman, who knows how to make a passenger feel 'at home.'" They are well deserving the popular favoriteism [sic] of which they have long been the objects--and their boat, by her safety, speed and regularity, will still secure a large share of public patronage. We never enjoyed a trip more than one we recently made to Keokuck [sic], and back, on board the 'Wave'."<sup>8</sup>

The business community received with pleasure an announcement in October, 1847, that the ferry at Hannibal had been made free to the public,

and the Gazette crowed enthusiastically that "We hope to see all Illinois over here, and trading largely, this Fall."<sup>9</sup>

The increasing flow of produce into Hannibal caused the city council to adopt in 1847 an ordinance which established a public market for the sale of provisions and commodities. The ordinance designated an area for the market and specified that meats should be handled on the north side and fruits, vegetables, fish and other items on the south side. The stands and stalls were to be leased in April each year at a public auction, with a minimum price of \$1.50 per quarter. The market master was to designate the place to be occupied by those without stalls, keep order, examine the goods, keep the area clean and report on supply and demand. The market was to be open from dawn to 9 a.m. on weekdays.<sup>10</sup>

One of Hannibal's principal industries during this period was meatpacking. In November, 1846, three plants were in operation with Samuel & Haines, a new plant, "large and superior . . . to any in the West," killing 75 cattle daily.<sup>11</sup> In early 1847 Hannibal reported four slaughterhouses and several packing houses which employed about 300 men during the killing season.<sup>12</sup> And in preparation for the 1847 season Dowling & Company built a new stone "hog hospital" with 20,000 square feet of floor space plus a 66 by 90 foot addition for the packing operation. As the season progressed Dowling's "Hibernia Packing House" alone was able to turn out some 500 barrels of processed meat daily.<sup>14</sup>

Closely related to the packing industry was the manufacture of barrels and casks, and in 1847 Hannibal had eight cooper shops which turned out an immense quantity of cooperage.<sup>15</sup>

In early 1847 the young city's businesses also included 14 dry goods houses, five commission houses, two hardware stores, one iron merchant, two druggists, five grocers, two tanners and dealers in stoves and castings, two drapers and clothing merchants, eight tailors, one hat manufacturer, three saddler shops, four boot and shoe shops, two watchmakers and jewellers, one sculptor, six brickyards, three hotels ("one German"), two livery stables, two steam grist mills, two steam sawmills, two confectionaries and bakeries, five cabinet makers and undertakers, six blacksmith shops, one steam distillery, eight dram shops, one iron foundry, one tobacco warehouse, two rope walks, one carding machine and one tannery. Among the skilled artisans were three house and sign painters, 20 carpenters and six bricklayers. The professional class included 15 physicians and 12 attorneys at law.<sup>16</sup>

In April, 1847, Phillip Heiss opened a bakery, stating that he would furnish bread "to his regular patrons, 24 FRESH LOAVES FOR ONE DOLLAR, delivered at the dwelling door, every morning."<sup>17</sup> At about the same time George Murray advertised that he "Would respectfully inform the Citizens of Hannibal that he has opened an ICE CREAM SALOON and EATING PLACE . . .

he will keep on hand lots of luxuries for the summer."<sup>18</sup>

The year 1847 also saw the opening of Hannibal's first shop for taking daguerrotypes, "The Light of Heaven Alone Being the Pencil--Nature the Artigt [sic]." The operator added that likenesses were "taken in any weather, and inclosed in fine morocco cases, handsomely finished, in a few minutes time."<sup>19</sup>

A few weeks earlier a new Hannibal firm had asked, "Will you be Shaved Sir. Then just step down to the corner of Main and Bird Street, to the 'Temple of Fashion' where you may expect always to find BARRETT & PIPER, Fashionable Barbers, Hair-Dressers, & c., Ready to take you by the nose, and with keen razors and practiced hands, scrape your Phiz as clean as the nature of the CASE will admit. Your whisker's [sic] and goatees will be dressed and curried in the most fascinating manner. Your hair champoned [sic], and trimmed in the latest fashion, and the ears never clipped. . . . LADIES will be waited on at their residences, and their hair dressed in the most elegant and beautiful manner for parties, balls &c., at moderate charges."<sup>20</sup>

The local businessmen were especially disturbed by two problems. One, the poor mail service, had been with the city from the beginning. In early 1848, after a disgruntled patron wrote on the post office door that he wished it would remain open longer hours and on Sundays, the postmaster placed a letter in the Gazette, stating that "the office is a poor, and miserably contemplated thing, and nothing but my poverty could induce me to keep it at all. The fact that I kept it in my dwelling heretofore, and was there to be called on at all hours of all days may have induced some to suppose that the law regulating it required such attention. . . . il [sic] has been and still is my intention to be as accommodating as the nature of the case will allow. The pay of the office is so low that I cannot employ assistance; and when I go to meals or boats the office must be closed."<sup>21</sup>

A second business problem resulted from the packet service which brought St. Louis businesses within easy reach of Hannibal customers. One local merchant, demanding that citizens patronize local firms, advertised, "ENCOURAGE YOUR OWN!! It will cost \$5.00 at least to go to St. Louis and back, \$1.50 per day while there, notwithstanding this, their [sic] are some, so opposed to encouraging home industry, and enerprise [sic], that they will go to St. Louis to procure their FURNATURE [sic], Get a flimzy stuck-to-gether, auction room article and pay the drayage and freight on it rather than buy AT HOME, When as fashionable and as cheap an article of much better workmanship, Can be had at all times at 'Wild Cat Corner,' Hannibal, Mo."<sup>22</sup>

Hannibal, like most frontier communities of the time, was handicapped by a scarcity of hard money. Businesses, especially the publishers, repeatedly advertised that they would barter for commodities in exchange for their goods. The Gazette stated in the fall of 1847 that "We want every body to have a paper, and especially every family, and in order to put it in the reach of all-- we will take wood, corn, potatoes, or marketing, which a family can

use, in exchange for the 'GAZETTE'."<sup>23</sup> The subscribers' delay in bringing in such commodities brought a later comment: "We would request such of our subscribers as have agreed to pay us in WOOD, to bring it on immediately, let it be seasoned, and split sticks. In this case, procrastination will not only be 'the thief of time,' but the cause of red noses!"<sup>24</sup>

The very scarcity of money caused even the prominent Samuel J. Harrison, at the time a candidate for mayor of Hannibal, to insert the following advertisement: "Call and Settle. All persons indebted to me, are requested to pay up. I need money and cannot wait any longer, this is the last notice."<sup>25</sup>

The people of Hannibal faced many other problems. Fire was a continual source of fear in communities where structures of wood predominated, and in January, 1847, after stressing the complete absence of firefighting equipment and noting five alarms in one day due to "ignition of chimney flues," the Gazette called for "great precaution, when the weather requires such quantities of fuel to be used as at present."<sup>26</sup>

A few weeks later fire destroyed five buildings in the business section and damaged the Virginia Hotel, which "was on fire several times, but by the best of care and management it was saved."<sup>27</sup>

In May, 1847, the council adopted an ordinance providing that when the owners of a major part of a block petitioned the mayor requesting that no additional wooden buildings be erected in that block, the mayor should so order.<sup>28</sup>

Public apathy delayed further action, however, and in September the Journal conceded that "It seems finally and decisively settled that the city of Hannibal is not shortly to have a fire company. We regret this because we believe that the money which would be necessary to buy an engine could not be better expended."<sup>29</sup>

Hannibal's streets also drew much comment, the type depending upon the season. In February, 1847, the Gazette reported that on Main Street "a crowd of men, horses and wagons, from Ralls, Monroe, Shelby, Randolph, Macon, Adair, Knox and other counties, are seen every day, and the hum and bustle of business is heard throughout the week."<sup>30</sup>

Spring brought serious damage to streets, making some "actually dangerous to waggons [sic] coming into the City after night. Let the gullies be filled up, if nothing more. The condition of Main street, needs some attention; it is perfectly flat, and in wet weather is covered with mud and water to the depth of two or three inches."<sup>31</sup> In July the editor queried, "We should like to know what has become of that benevolent old gentleman, who appeared last summer with a hogshead on a dray, so in-dust-riously giving the streets a showerbath! His services are needed."<sup>32</sup>

A wet autumn brought new comments: "we wonder if they [the city council] ever get up so far as the square between Hill & Bird on Main, for their own sakes we hope not unless prepared [sic] in making the 'crossings' to wade in 'scant three feet,' or 'march under mud twain.' No doubt this is

pleasant enough to those who like it, but the ladies (bless their pretty faces) are compelled to stay at home, and the merchants, [merchants] Laces, Caps, Ribbons, Cloves [Gloves], and Plumes, lie untouched, and the cry is 'hard times, money scarce no business,' whilst this together with many other evils arising [sic] from the situation of our thoroughfairs [sic] might so easily be remedied."<sup>33</sup>

The churches and lodges played an important role in Hannibal's social and cultural life. In 1847 Hannibal had one Masonic lodge, two lodges of Odd Fellows, and six organized religious congregations. In addition to the regular meetings, the churches often held protracted services which were generally well attended and fruitful. In May the Christian Church held a five-day meeting in the Methodist Church with three services daily and an out-of-town speaker, and the Methodists reported in September that their "protracted meeting, commenced some two weeks since . . . is still continued. Many have professed conversion, and the church has received a considerable accession to its membership."<sup>34</sup>

The churches attempted to reach the young men through "the Young Men's Prayer Meeting . . . held in the basement of the Presbyterian Church every Saturday evening, at half past 7 o'clock."<sup>35</sup>

The churches also assumed leadership in the observance of Christmas. At the Methodist Church the Sunday School met on Christmas Day at 9 a. m. for a hymn, a lecture by Thomas Sunderland, an address by the Reverend Mr. Marvin, distribution of refreshments, and a closing hymn. The Gazette reported that many were present, that it was a pleasure to look upon their "smiling, happy faces, and witness their demonstrations of pleasure," and that "good order was preserved throughout."<sup>36</sup>

Over 200 children participated in the July 4 celebration arranged in 1847 by the Methodist Church, when the children, teachers, and visitors met at the church and marched to the residence of the pastor. Here they sang a hymn, heard a prayer, sang "America," heard an address by a teacher, Orion Clemens, (the editor commented that his "voice was so low, that from where we sat, his remarks were inaudible, but we learn . . . that his address was a very interesting and instructive one"), sang "'Tis Independence Day," heard an address by R. F. Lakenan, sang "Friends of Freedom, Swell the Song," heard an address by H. D. La Cossitt, sang "Away the Bowl" (apparently a temperance song), had refreshments, returned to the church, sang "Again Let Thankful Songs Arise!," and heard a prayer followed by the benediction. The refreshments consisted of "an abundance of cake, candy, almonds, &c. . . and that most blessed of all beverages, pure and sparkling coldwater."<sup>37</sup>

Hannibal also had a Library Association, more commonly called the Library Institute, which at its fourth annual meeting, on January 28, 1847, presided over by John M. Clemens, president, reported that it had over 400 volumes and was debt free. During the winter the association held weekly

meetings in the City Hall and discussed such questions as "Should the private property of stockholders be liable for corporate debts?" and "Ought a man, before incurring responsibility as security, to ask his wife?"<sup>38</sup>

Other groups appealed to those with special interests, but their meetings in general were open to the public. In May, 1847, Hannibal Division, No. 11--Sons of Temperance was organized with 19 members "to promote the cause of Temperance, of 'LOVE, PURITY, & FIDELITY'--to render its members better men in all the relations they are called upon to sustain in life."<sup>39</sup>

This group also observed July 4, 1847, by hearing R. F. Lakenan and two other speakers, after marching behind "an excellent band of music" from their hall to the Baptist Church and pausing at the City Hall to invite the ladies into the procession.<sup>40</sup>

The Hannibal Medical Society held its annual meeting in the City Hall on April 30, 1847, and invited members of the medical profession and the public generally to attend.<sup>41</sup>

Concerts frequently brightened life in the community. Mr. and Mrs. Garvey gave an "unusually interesting Concert, which was largely attended," on December 9, 1846, and scheduled another, their last of the season, for December 18--admission, 25¢.<sup>42</sup> The Alleghanians, a group of musicians from New York, "men of excellent morality," gave a concert in April, charging 25¢.<sup>43</sup>

If the editor felt that the artist merited special consideration, he went overboard to plug the performance, as in the case of Mrs. Delamore, who gave a concert at the City Hall on September 23, "the object of which is to raise a small amount of money sufficient to take her on to her husband who is now lying sick at a point below. When we see a lady of refined mind leave the domestic circle to buffet with this uncharitable world, taking upon herself the support of a consumptive husband, and a family of small children, we should immediately give our 'mite.' Go one, go all, and you will be repaid."<sup>44</sup>

The people of Hannibal were also exposed to traveling lecturers during this period. On May 5, 1847, Messrs. Sparhawk and Layton presented a lecture and demonstrations on "Human Magnetism," and "The subject, (who resides in this city) seemed fully under the magnetic influence, any one who doubted, was desired to examine him." The team appeared in Hawkins' Saloon at 7:30 every night during the week, admission 10¢.<sup>45</sup> In September, Dr. Oliver of Cincinnati spoke at the City Hall on the electro-magnetic telegraph and the eclectic system of medicine.<sup>46</sup>

On June 13, 1848, Dr. Hay presented demonstrations in astronomy and the magnetic telegraph, a program which "gave entire satisfaction to the audience." The editor commented unhappily, however, "We regret that the audience was so small, and the idea suggested itself to our mind, had it been a 'monkey show' or a 'Negro Congo Dance,' the house would have been full."<sup>47</sup>

Circuses were common in Hannibal, three appearing in 1847 alone. The first, June & Turner's Menagerie & Circus, gave an afternoon performance on July 3 in its weatherproof "Grand Pavilion," 150 by 75 feet, and seating 3000. The circus employed the "most gorgeous and costly" equipment, "richly silver mounted" harness, and a "Caravan of 20 Carriages," including one carrying "Mr. Post's New York Military Brass Band, which will . . . entertain the Citizens with the choicest selections of music from the latest Operas, Marches, &c," admission of 40¢ with 10¢ tickets for children under 10.<sup>48</sup>

On July 29 E. F. Mabie & Company's Grand Olympic Arena and U. S. Circus came with 150 men and horses; Mr. Randall, the "Great Scotch Giant," who was 7' 6" tall, had a 57" chest, and weighed 432 pounds; the "beautiful female equestrian, Miss Laura Buckley" and a "fine Brass Band." This group, too, gave an afternoon performance only and at 50¢ and 25¢.<sup>49</sup>

On November 2 Rockwell & Company's Mammoth Circus, complete with a "splendid double water proof pavillion" seating 4,000, presented a troupe of 200 men and horses in afternoon and evening performances. The circus featured a clown--"the most fastidious can listen to his jokes and jibes without a blush"--, a Crusader's Tournament, four pageants, Tyrolese singers and acrobatic and equestrian acts.<sup>50</sup>

There is no doubt that the people of Hannibal were fond of bands, and in 1847 they determined to have their own. The Masons, Odd Fellows, and Sons of Temperance agreed to subscribe \$25 each in order to secure instruments, the loan to be repaid in music at half price whenever the organizations called upon the band.<sup>51</sup>

People also turned to the river for organized recreation. In July, 1847, for example, two cruises took place. The Ocean Wave, loaded with excursionists, steamed to Nauvoo, Illinois, and back on July 3. A week later the steam ferryboat was to "be fitted up with seats and awnings, and music will be provided for those who wish to 'trip it on the light, fantastic toe,' under the shade of some grove, down the shore . . . the boat will stop at the Cave, and those who wish to visit this remarkable cavern will not meet with a better opportunity." The price was \$1 per couple.<sup>52</sup>

The cave, then known as Simms' Cave, was located two miles south of the city and had been explored from four to six miles; "Its vaulted rooms, its winding flights, subterranean chambers, its spacious and dark avenues, crystal [sic] fountains and stupendous adamantine walls--all present objects of veneration and curious speculations."<sup>53</sup>

The holiday season provided a period of special activity. Events scheduled for December, 1847, included the Christmas ball and supper, music lessons being given to a class in the City Hotel "by Mr. Coinski, an accomplished musician," Monday night meetings of the sewing society formed by the Methodist ladies for the purpose of purchasing chandeliers for the church, the singing



class at the schoolhouse on Saturday evenings and the Sons of Temperance lectures on Saturday evenings.<sup>54</sup>

During the "season of fun and jollity, of hot punches and temperance processions, of sermons and balls, of praying and feasting," the mayor held open house on Christmas day for the reception of visitors and the extension of "lots of good cheer," the Palmyra and Hannibal Sons of Temperance joined to form a procession to the Baptist Church for a sermon and the ladies held open house on New Year's Day for the purpose of receiving calls: "Hospitable and agreeable at all times, on that day they will be peculiarly so to all who will avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by this good old social custom, to renew or extend their acquaintance."<sup>55</sup>

In spite of Hannibal's growth and of the outward signs of prosperity, there was much poverty in the locality, causing the Gazette to call attention to many families suffering for fuel and food: "He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord."<sup>56</sup>

The wealthier citizens staged many social events in the name of charity. In November, 1846, the ladies held a dinner in Hawkins' Saloon, feeding over 100 at 50¢ each, the receipts to go for the relief of destitute families.<sup>57</sup> On Christmas night 150 enjoyed a ball held in Hawkins' Saloon for the benefit of widows and orphans, gentlemen's tickets selling at \$2. Children were allowed at these affairs, as the editor noted that "Among the dancers we observed two or three little sylphs, from seven to ten years of age, who moved with fairy lightness and grace, as if to dance was the only motion they knew."<sup>58</sup>

The citizenry of Hannibal also seized upon special occasions as an opportunity to celebrate. Perhaps the best example during this period resulted from the mayor's proclamation in the spring of 1847 regarding a demonstration of "pride, joy and gratitude" for the achievements of American forces in Mexico. The resulting illumination, held on April 21, must have made a lasting impression on the youth of the town. Thirteen guns were discharged at sunrise, and another salute at noon reminded the people of the evening celebration. Flags were prominently displayed, and transparencies at various business places recalled "Old Zac," General Scott and favorite war scenes. At 7:30 p. m. the evening salute was fired, and blazing lights caused the city to glow as though afire. And then, in the words of the Gazette, "the Guard, six in number, mounted, wearing swords and long white scarfs, passed up the street, making way for the procession, which soon appeared lighted by torches and led by the marshal . . . and his assistants all wearing scarfs. The crowd on Main, was dense, and ladies and gentlemen, old and young, mingled in the merry throng. . . . [On reaching City Hall] The Marshal, from the rostrum, called on the crowd, to give three cheers for ZACARY [sic] TAYLOR, which was enthusiastically responded to--three more for SCOTT were called for, and given with a will. A voice from the crowd shouted, 'Three for the Missouri boys!' and the welking [sic] rang with the loud

huzzas.' " Four speeches held the crowd until 10 p. m. when, after more cheering for Taylor, Scott, Price, Doniphan and the Hannibal boys, the crowd dispersed. The mayor and guard, however, patrolled the city during the night to prevent any disturbance.<sup>59</sup>

Town meetings were called whenever a community problem or need for discussion arose. Among the favorite topics were voting requirements, building codes, public health and morality, fire protection, improvement of streets and wharves and restrictions on Negroes. Frequently only a small number attended, causing the papers to express disappointment. For example, after the failure of a meeting dealing with fire prevention the Gazette commented that "If it is proposed to hold a town meeting to consider of some matter touching the improvement of the City, some few go, but the large number 'forget.' the few are powerless and discouraged, and nothing is done. If some thimble-rigging buffoon, comes and advertises to edify the citizens of this great city with 'Dan Tucker' and the banjo, then, all go--none forget."<sup>60</sup>

One of the most active at the town meetings was John M. Clemens who, as chairman of the Committee on Roads, gave a detailed report on November 19, 1846, recommending the construction of a road from Hannibal to St. Joseph. At the same meeting he was appointed to a committee designated to prepare petitions requesting the transfer of southern Marion County, including Hannibal, to Ralls County.<sup>61</sup>

Although life in Hannibal was generally pleasant, a number of nuisances provided the editors with opportunities to lash out at the miscreants.

With the arrival of spring Hannibal's citizens became conscious of the proximity of the slaughterhouses. "The warm weather now operating to decay the filth about these places, and the south and east wind bringing the noisome particle into the streets and dwellings," complained the Gazette, "render the necessity of their removal imperative. . . . The unpleasantness of the effluvia alone ought to induce a cleansing of these places."<sup>62</sup>

Another nuisance was closely related to the same industry. "If a stranger visits our city," stated the Journal, "the first living thing that welcomes him is a dog; if he leaves the corporate limits, the last living thing that notices him is a dog; even in his midnight slumbers he hears the 'deep mouthed' baying of a hundred throats, and his dreams are strangely mixed up with hydrophobia and the thousand other ills that dog 'flesh is heir to.' No other animal can pass the streets without running the gauntlet of a score of curs."<sup>63</sup>

To alleviate the problem the council prohibited a family from keeping more than one dog unless it should secure a license at 60¢ for each additional dog. Only two months later a new ordinance provided that all dogs must be licensed annually, males at 50¢ for the first dog, \$1 for the second, and \$2 for the third, and females at \$1 for the first, \$4 for the second and \$10 for the third.<sup>64</sup>

A busy river port would by its nature attract many undesirables. In the fall of 1846 the Gazette called attention to "the fearful inroads that vice, in its worst forms, and all kinds of immorality are making in Hannibal" and asked, "Do we desire that Hannibal shall be known for its quiet, its order-loving--peace-keeping habits, or do we wish to see it as notorious for indignity as Louisville, and Natchez have been."<sup>65</sup>

A few weeks later it spoke of the "'gentlemen' of dubious character . . . about our town," advised the citizens to examine all the bank notes which they handled and to bar their doors at night, and warned that "Our friends from the country, would do well to keep a sharp look out--and avoid all games with those who may ask them to play." In February, 1847, it further noted the presence of thieves, and in the fall a fresh warning spoke of a "swarm of gentlemen black-legs, who hang round the Coffee Houses, ready to pounce upon, and fleece any whom they can lure into their meshes" and cautioned further that "they will attempt to accomplish their purposes by foul means, if they cannot by fair."<sup>66</sup>

The presence of the Negro on Hannibal streets also proved an annoyance to many residents. The Gazette complained that "our streets are lined with negroes loafing and rowdying every Sabbath day. Crowds of them occupy the street corners, and fill the kitchens of our citizens, and have become [sic] really annoyance."<sup>67</sup> This condition existed in spite of city ordinances which provided that no free Negro or mulatto could reside within the city without securing a license from the mayor, and that to secure this permit he must show evidence of good moral character and behavior, pay \$5 annually for the use of the city, and give a maximum bond of \$1,000 for his good behavior. Any unlicensed Negro without proof of freedom might be jailed as a runaway slave, and any Negro going about after 9 p. m. without a pass was subject to fine. Nor were Negroes allowed to hold an assemblage at night or remain at any ball or meeting after 11 p. m. without the mayor's permission. The ordinances further decreed that any white person over the age of ten who was found at any Negro social affair should be fined \$50, that anyone giving a slave a pass illegally should be fined from \$20 to the value of the slave, and that a master allowing his slave to hire out to others should be fined from \$5 to \$20.<sup>68</sup>

An active branch of the American Colonization Society existed in Hannibal, and on June 24, 1847, it authorized a committee composed of two ministers and one doctor to publish a letter inviting the Hannibal clergy to devote their first July sermon to colonization and to take up a collection for the benefit of the cause. This, the letter added, would be an appropriate time to think of "putting our African brother in possession of all the civil, social, and religious blessings which gladden our homes, on the very soil from which he has been ruthlessly severed and torn."<sup>69</sup>

In 1847 the council became increasingly conscious of the need for improved sanitation, and in July it ordered that the street commissioner see

that all public wells and pumps be kept in good repair and that no animals be watered at any public well except two designated for that purpose.<sup>70</sup>

The council also decreed that no vegetable matter, unclean substance or filthy water be thrown into the streets or into Bear Creek, that refuse from the slaughterhouses be conducted into the Mississippi River and out into the current so that it could not return to the shore, and that "The pits of all privies hereafter [sic] constructed or built within the city, shall be at least ten feet deep, and walled up with brick or stone."<sup>71</sup>

In order to control the populace the council in 1847 published a list of misdemeanors which were punishable by fines of \$1 to \$100, including disturbing the peace, riot or unlawful assembly, disturbing religious worship, false alarm of fire, intoxication in public, nudity or improper dress, sale of indecent pictures and books, insufficient clothing while swimming in the Mississippi River or in any water in the city between one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset, playing billiards or ten pins or participating in any public amusement on Sunday, public sale of liquor on Sunday except in cases of sickness or death, keeping a bawdy house, riding or driving a beast of burden faster than a moderate gait except in necessity, flying a kite in a highway or any sport which might frighten horses and exhibiting a jack, bull, or stallion in a public place and near a house or dwelling.<sup>72</sup>

All of this necessitated the construction of a jail, and in May, 1847, the mayor stated "that the City has completed the fitting up of a Calaboose, for the accommodation of those gentlemen who might otherwise injure their health by exposure to the night air."<sup>73</sup>

The council also established a workhouse to satisfy the demand that those convicted of minor crimes should "be put to work--not locked up, and fed in idleness, to confirm their habits of vagrancy, and send them forth punished, but not reformed, worse instead of better."<sup>74</sup>

The people of Hannibal were interested in educating their children, and private schools operated soon after the original settlement. Special schools frequently made their appearance, such as "the writing academy of Messrs JENNINGS & GUERNSEY," which gave lessons "during the day or evening, or both, as the scholars may prefer," and offered a "ladies class . . . which meets in the afternoon."<sup>75</sup>

In 1847 the Reverend Grosvenor offered to "devote one hour of each day, to the gratuitous instruction of those young gentlemen, who may be desirous of studying the Latin or Spanish language." The students, who met at 8 a. m., needed only to buy their own books and to study their lessons at home.<sup>76</sup>

Typical of Hannibal's more advanced schools was Wm. Taylor's Hannibal Academy, which offered courses ranging from reading and writing to surveying, shorthand, and ancient geography, at a cost of \$4 to \$6 for 12 weeks, with no charge during periods of sickness and a 50¢ fee for fuel "during the time necessary."<sup>77</sup>

Advertisements indicate that both necessities and luxuries were readily available in the area of food and clothing. A number of stores offered cheese, codfish, dried fruit, cakes and pastry, and fancy wines and liquors.<sup>78</sup> We may be sure, however, that the food consumed in most homes was produced at home or in the area.

Although most of the people undoubtedly dressed in calicoes and home-spuns, stores made it possible for others to ape the fashions of the East. Women, for example, could purchase quilted satins, plaid silks, velvets, ribbons, plumes, cashmere and muslin de laine robes, plain and figured alpacas, merinos, gaiter boots and linen cambric handkerchiefs. Men could wear silk undershirts and have suits of fine dress cloths, cassimeres and vestings, made by Hannibal's tailors. Readily available accessories included scarfs, cravats and watches.<sup>79</sup>

Although we have noted that Hannibal had 15 physicians in 1847, the people had a tendency to rely upon home remedies and patent medicines. The Journal in 1847, for example, offered the following for its readers: "The bark of a willow tree, burnt to ashes, mixed with strong vinegar, and applied to the parts, will remove all warts, corns, and other excrescences on any part of the body or limbs."<sup>80</sup>

And readily available were such nostrums as Dr. Bragg's Sugar Coated Pills, an "improved treatment for Fever and Ague, and Bilious Fevers" and excellent for "all diseases prevalent in a western and southern climate"; Dr. Wistar's Balsam of Wild Cherry, for consumption and liver complaint, which "brings back the bloom of health to the cheek, lustre to the eye, strength to the system, joy and gladness to the soul, and happiness to man" [the advertisement also states that "we sincerely pledge ourselves to make no assertions as to the virtues of this medicine, and to hold out no hope to suffering humanity, which facts will not warrant"]; Comstock's Concentrated Compound Fluid Extract of Sarsaparilla "for the cure of Scrofula, chronic rheumatism, general debility, cutaneous diseases, Scaly eruptions of the Skin, . . . Mercurical and Syphilese Disease, . . . pains and sweling [sic] of the bones, . . . [and] Costiveness in females and males"; Genuine Balm of Columbia for creating a "luxuriant head of hair, free from dandruff" ["In cases of baldness it will more than exceed your expectations. Many who have lost their hair for twenty years have had it restored to its original perfection . . . it also causes the fluid to flow with which the delicate hair tubes is [sic] filled; by which thousands (whose hair was as grey as the Asiatic eagle) have had their hair restored to its natural color"]; Connell's Magical Pain Extractor for chilblains, burns, swellings, and sore feet; Langley's Great Western Indian Panacea, recommended for practically all ills from colds to piles; Dr. Larzello's Juno Cordial or Procreative Elixer for both male and female "debility, impotency and barrenness, and all irregularities of nature," a "remedy for those in the married state without offspring"; Dr. McNair's Accoustic [sic] Oil, a

cure for deafness, which has enabled many to throw away their ear trumpets; Dr. Connell's mixture for Gonorrhoea and Gleet, Seminal effusions, and Weakness of Utera and Bladder, "equally good and certain for females"; Buchan's Hungarian Balsam of Life; Wistar's Balsam of Wild Cherry; Kolmstock's Vermifuge for worms; Hay's Liniment for piles; and Dr. Storm's Scotch Cough Candy, which "not only allays Chronical Irritation, but operating as a very mild purge, it keeps the stomach and bowels in a healthy condition, leaving the patient an appetite which few other Cough Mixtures could impart."<sup>81</sup>

When a smallpox epidemic was reported in St. Louis and fear spread that it might be communicated to Hannibal, the Journal did report, however, that "Those desiring it, can be vaccinated by applying to the members of the Board of Health."<sup>82</sup>

Occasionally a quack was exposed, and on one occasion the Journal blasted a man named Robinson to whom it had earlier referred as "Professor of diseases of the eye, from the London Ophthalmic Institution": "A scamp named ROBINSON, and calling himself Doctor, who has been blowing about the country for some months past, after managing to get smartly into our debt, left, a few days ago, for parts unknown. He professes to be an oculist, but we conjecture it would puzzle him to tell the difference between fistula in oculo and fistula in ano. He is about five feet 6 or 7 inches high, rather slender, pop-eyed, and had on when he left a gray frock coat with brass buttons. . . he may infallibly be recognized by his cockney brogue, liverystable gait, vulgar manners, and a habit he has, when on horseback, of galloping as if the Devil or the constable was hard after him. He always requires one-third of his pay in advance--a practice . . . which we wish we had adopted in our transactions with him."<sup>83</sup>

In spite of, or perhaps because of, the variety of remedies available, death was common in Hannibal, and then the bereaved might call upon the services of an artisan like Jacob Coffman, a cabinet maker, who advertised that "Particular pains will be taken to put up COFFINS in the neatest style, and on the shortest notice possible. He keeps a Hearse, the services of which can be had free of charge, when connected with his business. For the convenience of those who may wish his services at night, a light will be kept burning in his front room."<sup>84</sup>

And then, if the deceased were of sufficient note, the papers might carry a note such as the following: "The Rev. William . . . [?], will preach a Funeral Discourse on the death of the late Rev. S. S. Parr, in the Baptist Church, on next Sabbath morning at 11 o' clock. The public are respectfully invited to attend."<sup>85</sup>

Such was Hannibal in the days of Sam Clemens' youth, a city which was in many ways contradictory, which in some ways demonstrated its Southern heritage and in others seemed to be a child of New England. The young Sam Clemens knew many of the people to whom we have referred, attended many

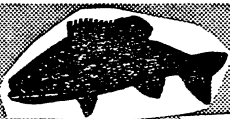
of the events which have been noted, and was familiar with many of the businesses and even the patent medicines. And certainly this Hannibal left him with many impressions from which he drew in later years.

Valley City State Teachers College  
Valley City, North Dakota

Footnotes:

- 1 T. M. Rogers, Atlas of Marion County, Missouri (Quincy, Illinois, 10; History of Marion County, Missouri (St. Louis, 1884), 887, 895, 896, 899.
- 2 Hannibal Gazette, February 25, 1847.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid., September 23, 1847.
- 5 Ibid., February 25, 1847.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid., July 1, 1847.
- 8 Ibid., November 11, 1847.
- 9 Ibid., October 7, 1847.
- 10 Hannibal Journal, May 27, 1847.
- 11 Gazette, November 5, 1846.
- 12 Ibid., February 25, 1847.
- 13 Ibid., September 23, 1847.
- 14 Ibid., November 25, 1847.
- 15 Ibid., February 25, 1847.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid., April 29, 1847.
- 18 Ibid., June 10, 1847.
- 19 Ibid., January 14, 1847.
- 20 Ibid., December 17, 1846.
- 21 Ibid., May 4, 1848.
- 22 Ibid., April 29, 1847.
- 23 Ibid., November 4, 1847.
- 24 Ibid., November 26, 1846.
- 25 Ibid., March 11, 1847.
- 26 Ibid., January 21, 1847.
- 27 Ibid., April 29, 1847.
- 28 Journal, May 20, 1847.
- 29 Ibid., September 9, 1847.
- 30 Gazette, February 25, 1847.
- 31 Ibid., April 15, 1847.
- 32 Ibid., July 1, 1847.
- 33 Ibid., November 25, 1847.
- 34 Ibid., May 6, September 23, 1847.
- 35 Ibid., March 18, 1847.
- 36 Ibid., December 31, 1846.
- 37 Ibid., July 1, 8, 1847.
- 38 Ibid., November 12, 17, December 10, 1846. February 4, 1847.
- 39 Ibid., May 20, 1847.
- 40 Ibid., July 8, 1847.
- 41 Ibid., April 29, 1847.
- 42 Ibid., December 10, 1846.
- 43 Ibid., April 20, 1848.
- 44 Ibid., September 23, 1847.
- 45 Ibid., May 6, 1847.
- 46 Journal, September 9, 1847.
- 47 Ibid., June 15, 1848.
- 48 Gazette, July 1, 1847.
- 49 Journal, July 22, 1847.
- 50 Ibid., October 14, 1847; Gazette, October 14, 1847.
- 51 Gazette, March 25, July 1, 1847.
- 52 Ibid., July 1, 8, 1847.
- 53 Ibid., February 25, 1847.
- 54 Ibid., December 2, 1847.
- 55 Journal, December 16, 23, 1847.
- 56 Gazette, January 21, 1847.
- 57 Ibid., November 5, 1846.
- 58 Ibid., December 17, 31, 1846.
- 59 Ibid., April 15, 22, 1847.
- 60 Ibid., November 26, 1846.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Ibid., May 27, 1847.
- 63 Journal, July 15, 1847.
- 64 Ibid., July 15, September 9, 1847.

- 65 Gazette, November 12, 1846.  
 66 Ibid., January 14, February 25, September 2, 1847.  
 67 Ibid., October 14, 1847.  
 68 Journal, February 25, 1847.  
 69 Gazette, July 1, 1847.  
 70 Journal, July 15, 1847.  
 71 Ibid., June 3, 1847.  
 72 Ibid., June 16, 1847.  
 73 Gazette, May 20, 1847.  
 74 Journal, July 29, 1847;  
Gazette, August 12, 1847.  
 75 Gazette, November 26, 1846.  
 76 Ibid., June 10, 1847.
- 77 Journal, May 13, 1847.  
 78 Ibid., May 20, 1847; Gazette, November 12, 1846, April 29, June 10, 1847.  
 79 Gazette, February 25, 1847.  
Journal, December 31, 1846, January 7, 1847.  
 80 Journal, January 21, 1847.  
 81 Gazette, April 20, 1848.  
 82 Journal, June 10, 1847.  
 83 Ibid., October 21, 1847.  
 84 Gazette, January 14, 1847.  
 85 Ibid., August 19, 1847.



INTER-REGIONAL ASA CONFERENCE

Friday-Saturday, May 4-5

HOTEL ALGIERS, MIAMI BEACH

GENERAL TOPIC: *Image of America Abroad and National Defense*

Friday, May 4 (morning session)

TOPIC: "Approaches to the Study of the Image of America Abroad"

PRESIDING: CHARLES BOEWE, Executive Secretary ASA

PAPERS: "The Evolving Image of the U. S."—GERALD CRITOPH, Stetson University; "Historiography and the Study of the American Image"—JOHN J. APPEL, Essex Community College; "The American Search for Its Image Abroad"—WILLIAM RANDEL, Florida State University

DISCUSSANTS: HENRY WASSER, City University of New York; RICHARD D. MILES, Wayne State University

Luncheon

"The Foreign Students' Image of America: The Princeton Seminar on American Studies"—WILLARD THORP, Princeton University

Friday, May 4 (afternoon session)

TOPIC: "Approaches to the Study of the Image of America Abroad"

PRESIDING: CHARLTON TEBEAU, University of Miami

PAPERS: "Approaches to the Study of the Image of America in France"—PERCY G. ADAMS, University of Tennessee; "American Studies and the Alliance for Progress"—EUGENE CURRENT-GARCIA, Auburn University; "The American Image in Vietnam: A Conflict Between Policy and Imagery?"—JASON FINKLE, Michigan State University

DISCUSSANTS: E. MCCLUNG FLEMING, Winterthur Museum; DAVID M. CHALMERS, University of Florida

Saturday, May 5 (morning session)

TOPIC: "Molding the American Image Abroad"

PRESIDING: ARLIN TURNER, Duke University

PANEL: JOHN GARRATY, Columbia University; SAUL K. PADOVER, New School for Social Research; EDD W. PARKS, University of Georgia; FRANCIS A. YOUNG, Conference Board of Associated Research Councils

