

autobiography,” he wrote to his friend William Dean Howells. “You will be astonished to see how like talk it is ... what a dewy and breezy and woodsy freshness it has.” He did much of this dictation in 1905 and 1906 at a rented summer home, Upton Farm, in Dublin N.H. There he especially liked working on a veranda which, he said, has “one of the most beautiful landscape visions on the planet ... an inspiring place.”

He did not want his autobiography to be organized chronologically, or by topic, or by any other mode of systemization. He wanted rather to let the work reflect thought after thought, memory after memory as, dictating day after day, they occurred to him. When his older brother, Orion, sought advice for making his own autobiography, Twain wrote, “When you recollect something that belonged in an earlier chapter, do not go back, but jam it in where you are. Discursiveness does not hurt an autobiography in the least.” And indeed his own autobiography is, I think, fundamentally discursive, that is, given to moving freely from one topic to another: words about friends, acquaintances, heroes (he was close friends with and an ardent admirer of Ulysses S. Grant, for example) villains, and foreign countries both European and Asian. Although he occasionally has dark thoughts—about individuals, about governments, about military behavior for example—most of his memories reflect at least a hint of amusement, even when they suggest a deep anger, which they sometimes do.

Mark Twain’s first book, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, was published in 1867 when he was 32 years old. The *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* came in 1876, and the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in 1884. It is almost a commonplace to hear literary professionals suggest that Huckleberry Finn is the greatest American novel.

The Tuttle Library has generous holdings in Mark Twain fiction and biography. The Autobiography has now been added to these holdings and is available for borrowing. ☞

WINNIE’S MAIDEN VOYAGE

Schatze Moore

My husband, Peter, and I have a treasured summer-time treat. On Sundays we like to stop our work around 3pm-ish. We pack up our favorite picnic foods, load the canoe in the back of the pickup truck, and head off to Gregg Lake. Usually, by the time we arrive at the lake most folks have headed for home and serenity has returned which is great for us because that is just what we are looking for. We paddle for a while, and once we have beached the canoe, Peter swims a little, then we eat a bit, we talk a bit, we watch the lake, and we watch the sun go down.

We have a young dog that Peter and I have talked about introducing to the canoe because we’d like her to share in our pleasant time. Winnie is a wonderful dog with a great sense of fun, but she has some quirks. She is extremely alert and aware of her environment, and she is also very wary of her environment. She is unsure of people activity. Last summer, if we took her to the lake for a swim, she wouldn’t get out of the car if other people and dogs were there. She is very comfortable riding in the car, but she doesn’t like to get in it. We wondered if we were able to get her in the canoe would we be able to keep her in it. We wondered if we would get flipped over in the middle of the lake. We wondered if we would mind losing our stuff.

So, one Sunday in mid July Peter said it was time for Winnie’s maiden voyage. He thought the best way to do it, was to just do it. So we did. We put the canoe in the lake, and loaded in our stuff. I sat in the bow facing Peter and when we asked Winnie to get in she did. We attached the leash to her collar so that I could control her movements somewhat, and we were off. She shook like leaves on a tree in the wind, she moved from right side to left side, she tried to drink the lake, but she stayed in the canoe and we made it to our favorite landing spot.

After unloading the canoe, Peter wanted to swim. In he went and Winnie after him. She caught up to him, took him by the wrist in a soft bite, and pulled him back to shore. Each time he swam out, she followed him and pulled him back in. She had a great time. She sniffed at the abundance of things to smell, she watched the lake, and she waded in the water.

After the sun had gone down, we loaded back into the canoe and paddled back the direction we had come with Winnie our canoe dog. ☞

FREE Community Suppers

Sept 15 • Oct 20 • Nov 17 • Presbyterian Church • 5:30 PM



ALLEN CHIROPRACTIC, PLLC
Loyall C. Allen, D.C.

14 Pleasant Street, PO Box 158
Antrim, NH 03440

Monday & Friday • 9:00 - 1:00 and 2:30-6:00
Thursday • 1:00 - 6:00, **Saturday** • by Appointment
603.588.2900 • Fax: 603.588.2903

MISSING LIMRIKS

Lyman Gilmore

We are missing several early issues of the Limrik and hope that readers will have copies stashed away that we can either have or photocopy to make our archive complete. We need every issue from Volume 1, #1 (December 1991) through Volume 4, #2 (March 1995). If you have any or all of these and are willing to donate or have them copied, please let me know. lyman-gil@Comcast.net – 588 6860. Thank you.