

Roughing It

by
Mark Twain

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**First
Published**

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Roughing It Pdf

By

Mark Twain



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MARK TWAIN
ROUGHING IT



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Roughing It
by Mark Twain

PREFATORY to *Roughing It*

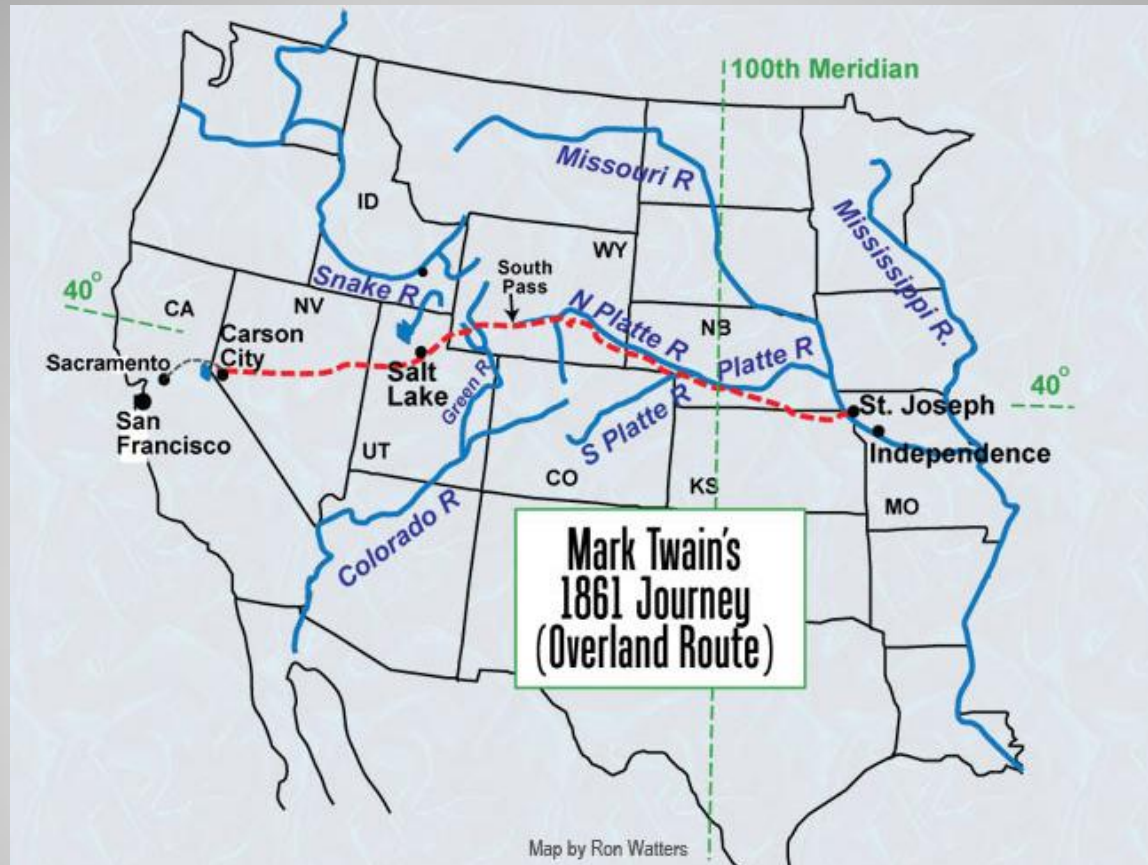
“This book is merely a personal narrative, and not a pretentious history or a philosophical dissertation. It is a record of several years of variegated vagabondizing, and its object is rather to help the resting reader while away an idle hour than afflict him with metaphysics, or goad him with science. Still, there is information in the volume; information concerning an interesting episode in the history of the Far West, about which no books have been written by persons who were on the ground in person, and saw the happenings of the time with their own eyes. I allude to the rise, growth and culmination of the silver-mining fever in Nevada—a curious episode, in some respects; the only one, of its peculiar kind, that has occurred in the land; and the only one, indeed, that is likely to occur in it.

Yes, take it all around, there is quite a good deal of information in the book. I regret this very much; but really it could not be helped: information appears to stew out of me naturally, like the precious oil of roses out of the otter. Sometimes it has seemed to me that I would give worlds if I could retain my facts; but it cannot be. The more I calk up the sources, and the tighter I get, the more I leak wisdom. Therefore, I can only claim indulgence at the hands of the reader, not justification.

THE AUTHOR. “

Mark Twain Chronology in Context

- 1830 - Mormon Church organized by Joseph Smith in Fayette New York.
- 1835 – Mark Twain born in Missouri. (His real name is Samuel Clemens.)
- 1830's - Two Thousand miles of railroads built.
- 1841 - First Emigrant wagon trains for California.
- 1842 - Settlement of Oregon begins via the Oregon Trail
- 1845 - Thoreau begins building a cabin beside Walden pond. He stays there until 1847.
- 1848 - Gold discovered in California. 80,000 prospectors emigrate in 1849
- 1851 – Mark Twain begins work as a journeyman printer with the *Hannibal Gazette*.
- 1854 - Henry David Thoreau publishes Walden
- 1857 – Mark Twain becomes an assistant pilot on the Mississippi. Spends two years on the river.
- 1860 - First Pony Express between Sacramento, CA and St. Joseph, MO. Service ended when first transcontinental telegraph line completed the next year.
- 1861 - Abraham Lincoln is sworn in as the 16th President of the United States. Confederate assault Fort Sumter. Sumter surrenders. Civil War Starts. Twain serves a couple of weeks, and then leaves for Nevada with his brother Orion.
- 1862 – Twain works as a reporter in Nevada
- 1864 – Twain moves to San Francisco. Works as a writer.
- 1865 - The Confederate States of America surrender at Appomattox Courthouse, ending the Civil War.
- 1869 - The Transcontinental Railroad is completed at Promontory Point, Utah. *Innocents Abroad* is a big seller
- 1872 – Twain publishes *Roughing It* . Congress establish first national park: Yellowstone
- 1873 - Banks failed. Panic begins in Sept. Depression lasts 5 years.
- 1873 – Twain publishes the *Gilded Age* (about corruption in business & politics)
- 1884 - Publishes *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- 1890 - Idaho is the 43rd state admitted to the Union. Battle of Wounded Knee, SD last major Indian battle
- 1890's – Twain goes into debt
- 1895 – Twain goes on a worldwide tour to pay off debts
- 1898 – Twain completes paying off debts
- 1910 – Twain dies.

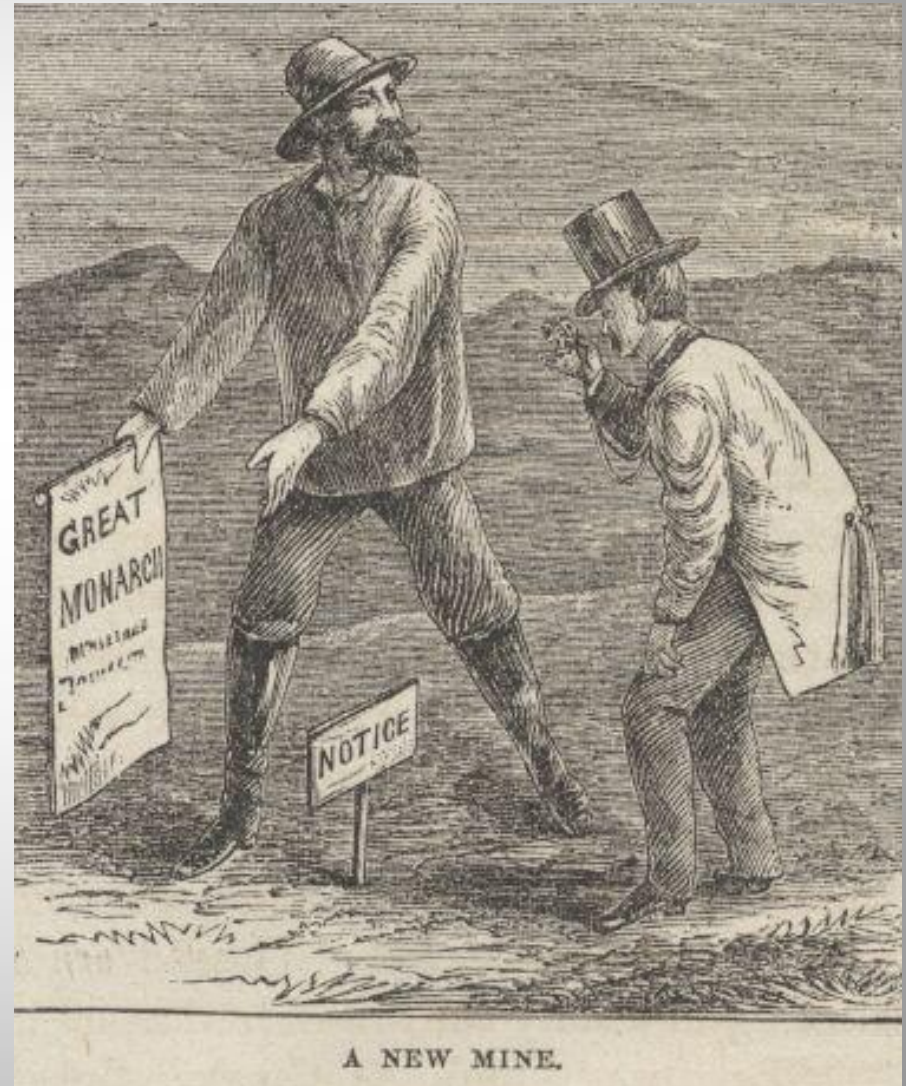


Mark Twain's journey in *Roughing It*

Source: <http://www.ronwatters.com/OLNotes4.html>

Silver Mining

- “Every man owned "feet" in fifty different wild cat mines and considered his fortune made. Think of a city with not one solitary poor man in it! One would suppose that when month after month went by and still not a wild cat mine (by wild cat I mean, in general terms, any claim not located on the mother vein, i.e., the "Comstock") yielded a ton of rock worth crushing, the people would begin to wonder if they were not putting too much faith in their prospective riches; but there was not a thought of such a thing. They burrowed away, bought and sold, and were happy.
- New claims were taken up daily, and it was the friendly custom to run straight to the newspaper offices, give the reporter forty or fifty "feet," and get them to go and examine the mine and publish a notice of it. They did not care a fig what you said about the property so you said something.”
- From Chapter XLIV, *Roughing It* by Mark Twain



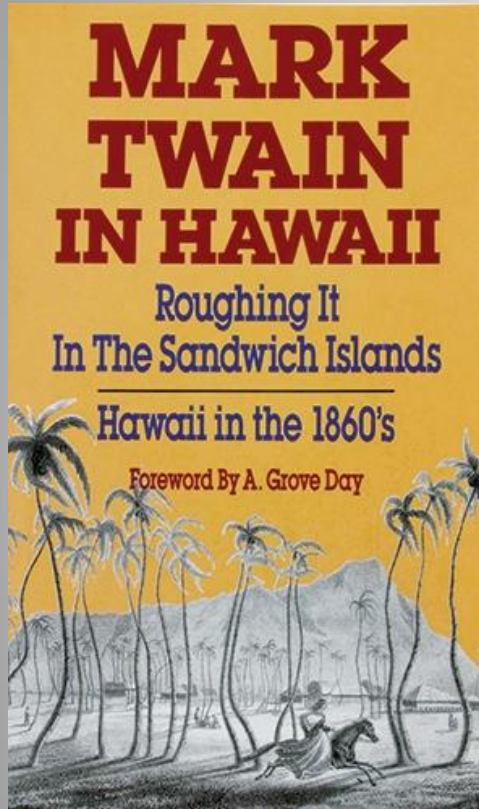


Detail from 1875 Comstock Lode & Washoe Mining Claims Map

FROM THE MARY B. ANSARI MAP LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF
NEVADA, RENO

http://nas.library.unr.edu/Keck/HistTopoNV/Historic_Maps/comstock_lode_washoe_mining_claims.jpg

Sandwich Islands/Hawaii



- Twain was one of the first American writers to rhapsodize about Hawaii, as the Sandwich Islands are known today.
- He revised his dispatches on assignment for the Sacramento Union in 1866 in his 1872 travelogue *Roughing It*. These are the charming tales of an outsider attempting to make sense of the rituals and unfamiliar terrain--not to mention the surfboards--of an exotic civilization.
- Twain's trip to the islands helped him to discover his writerly voice, and his experiences in Hawaii played a major role in the development of his anti-imperialist views.
- The scholar Jim Zwick says that Twain's Hawaiian sojourn was critical for "honing his skill at interpreting a foreign country for an American audience"--a skill he would later put to use writing *The Innocents Abroad* and other books.

Chapter LXV. Oahu and Nuuanu Valley

"By and by, after a rugged climb, we halted on the summit of a hill which commanded a far-reaching view. The moon rose and flooded mountain and valley and ocean with a mellow radiance, and out of the shadows of the foliage the distant lights of Honolulu glinted like an encampment of fireflies. The air was heavy with the fragrance of flowers. The halt was brief.--Gayly laughing and talking, the party galloped on, and I clung to the pommel and cantered after. Presently we came to a place where no grass grew--a wide expanse of deep sand. They said it was an old battle ground. All around everywhere, not three feet apart, the bleached bones of men gleamed white in the moonlight. We picked up a lot of them for mementoes. I got quite a number of arm bones and leg bones-- of great chiefs, may be, who had fought savagely in that fearful battle in the old days, when blood flowed like wine where we now stood--and wore the choicest of them out on Oahu afterward, trying to make him go. All sorts of bones could be found except skulls; but a citizen said, irreverently, that there had been an unusual number of "skull-hunters" there lately--a species of sportsmen I had never heard of before.

Nothing whatever is known about this place--its story is a secret that will never be revealed...[Twain reports of a speculative story he heard about the imagined battle] .. says the Oahuans were intrenched in Nuuanu Valley; that Kamehameha ousted them, routed them, pursued them up the valley and drove them over the precipice. He makes no mention of our bone-yard at all in his book."

-excerpt from Chapter LXV, *Roughing It*

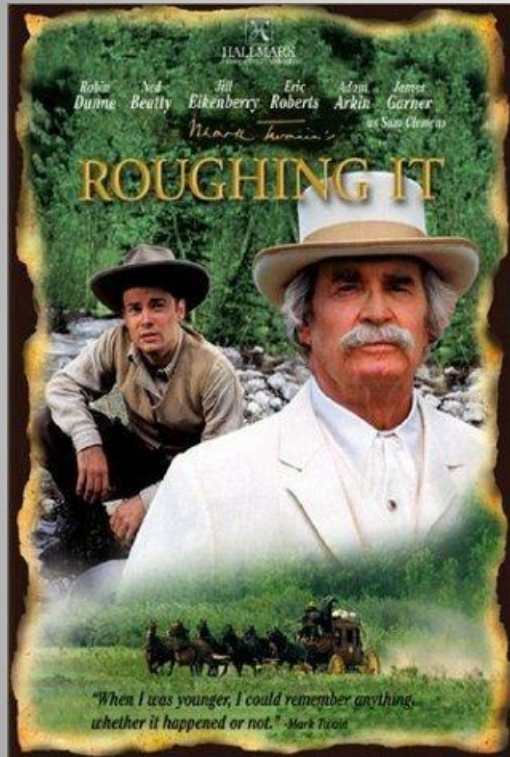


Appendices?

APPENDIX

- A. —Brief Sketch of Mormon History
- B.—The Mountain Meadows Massacre
- C.—Concerning a Frightful Assassination that was never Consummated (Conrad Wiegand, of Gold Hill, Nevada)

Film Adaptations



- 2002 brought a four-hour miniseries version of Mark Twain's *Roughing It* from the Hallmark cable channel
- The movie portrays the story told in tall-tale flashbacks as Twain spins stories while giving a graduation speech in 1891.
- James Garner portrays the older Samuel Clemens character.

• <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0290280/mediaindex>

The End and The Moral

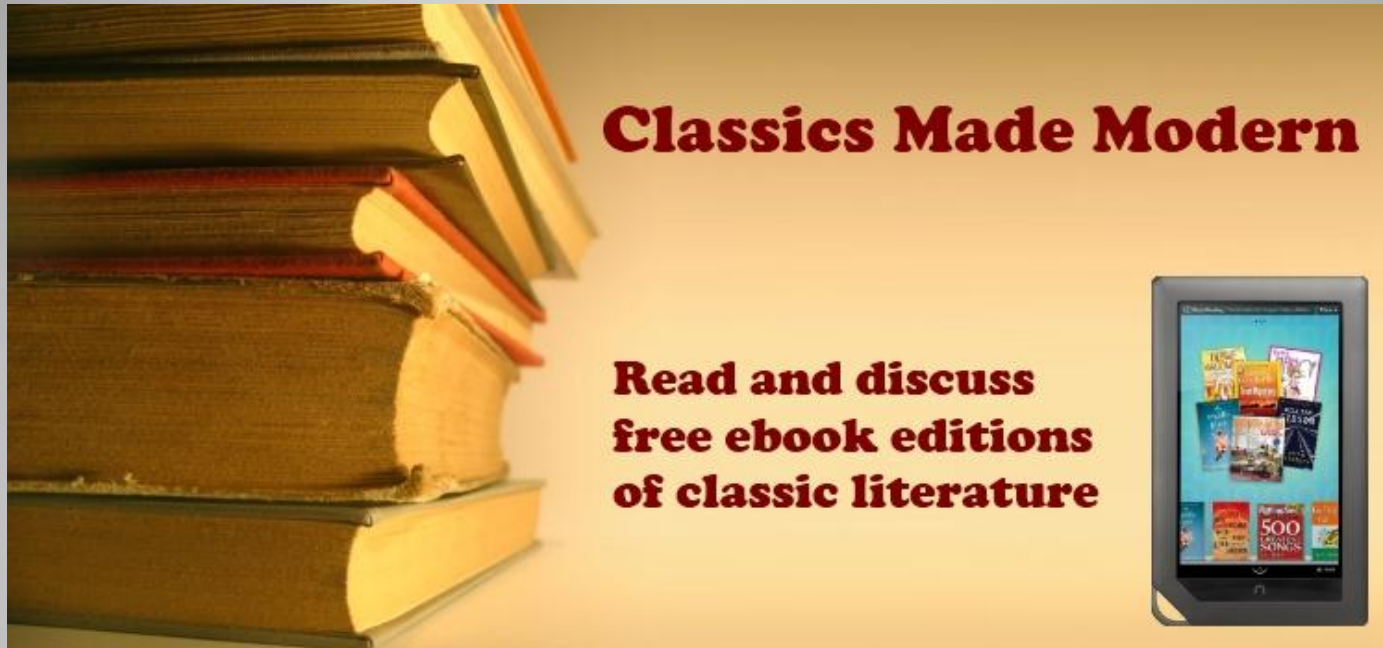
When I returned to San Francisco I projected a pleasure journey to Japan and thence westward around the world; but a desire to see home again changed my mind, and I took a berth in the steamship, bade good-bye to the friendliest land and liveliest, heartiest community on our continent, and came by the way of the Isthmus to New York—a trip that was not much of a picnic excursion, for the cholera broke out among us on the passage and we buried two or three bodies at sea every day. I found home a dreary place after my long absence; for half the children I had known were now wearing whiskers or waterfalls, and few of the grown people I had been acquainted with remained at their hearthstones prosperous and happy—some of them had wandered to other scenes, some were in jail, and the rest had been hanged. These changes touched me deeply, and I went away and joined the famous Quaker City European Excursion and carried my tears to foreign lands.

Thus, after seven years of vicissitudes, ended a "pleasure trip" to the silver mines of Nevada which had originally been intended to occupy only three months. However, I usually miss my calculations further than that.

MORAL.

If the reader thinks he is done, now, and that this book has no moral to it, he is in error. The moral of it is this: If you are of any account, stay at home and make your way by faithful diligence; but if you are "no account," go away from home, and then you will have to work, whether you want to or not. Thus you become a blessing to your friends by ceasing to be a nuisance to them—if the people you go among suffer by the operation.

--from the concluding chapter of *Roughing It* by Mark Twain



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