

Bend of Trail - CAS™ Shoot – JUNE, 2015

# Mark Twain in Virginia City.

This month you'll defend Freedom of the Press and  
Freedom of (humorous) Speech in the American Wild West

If you have ever done much traveling in the West, it is likely you will come upon half a dozen stories that begin, "When Mark Twain was here in so-and-so, he is quoted to have said..." It gets most tiresome to know that despite the hardships of 19th century travel that Samuel Clemens beat you to it! In San Francisco as we shivered out on the bay in August, we heard a quote often attributed to Twain: "The coldest winter I ever spent was summer in San Francisco." We were once on a ship in the Caribbean. A young steward stopped by and asked, "Have you read Mark Twain's *Following the Equator: A Journey Around the World?*, it's a hoot!" Around the world? Huh! Later, I was in France, and a co-traveler quoted Clemens about France from *The Innocents Abroad*. Well I gave up trying to match his travels and his humor. Serious (and some not-so-serious) writing began for Clemens at a newspaper called the *Territorial Enterprise* in Virginia City, Nevada.

Writing under the name of Mark Twain, Samuel Clemens began publishing news stories in the Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise* in June, 1862.

"Born in Missouri in 1835, Clemens followed a circuitous route to becoming an observer and writer of the American West. As a young man he apprenticed as a printer and worked in St. Louis, New York, and Philadelphia. In 1856, he briefly considered a trip to South America where he thought he could make money collecting coca leaves. A year later, he became a riverboat pilot apprentice on the Mississippi River, and worked on the water for the next four years.

In 1861, Clemens' brother Orion was appointed secretary to the territorial governor of Nevada. Clemens jumped at the offer to accompany Orion on his western adventure. He spent his first year in Nevada prospecting for a gold or silver mine but was no more successful than the vast majority of would-be miners. In need of

money, he accepted a job as reporter for a Virginia City, Nevada, newspaper called the *Territorial Enterprise*. His articles covering the bustling frontier-mining town began to appear... Like many newspapermen of the day, Clemens adopted a pen name, signing his articles with the name Mark Twain, a term from his old river boating days.

Clemens' stint as a Nevada newspaperman revealed an exceptional talent for writing. In 1864, he traveled farther West to cover the booming state of California. Fascinated by the frontier life, Clemens drew on his western experiences to write one of his first published works of fiction, the 1865 short story "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." The success of this classic western tall tale catapulted Clemens out of the West, and he became a world-hopping journalist for a California newspaper." - *History*

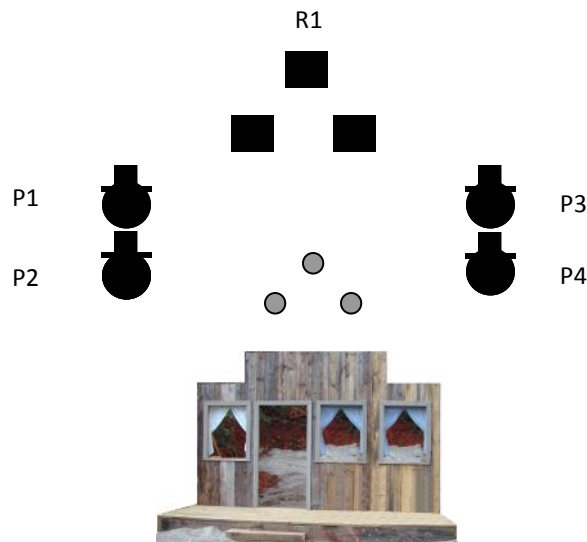
U.S. Senator William "Bill" Stewart knew Clemens quite well. He wrote, "Sam Clemens was a busy person. He went around putting things in the newspaper about people and stirring up trouble. He did not care whether the things he wrote were true or not, just so he could write something, and naturally he was not popular." One day Stewart asked Clemens, "You are getting worse every day. Why can't you be genial like your brother Orion? You ought to be hung for what you published this morning!" To which Clemens replied, "I don't mean anything by that....But I must make a living and [so] I must write. My employers demand it, and I am helpless..." - *Williams* Some things might not have changed that much in the newspaper publishing world.

#### *Helpful References:*

History.com <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/mark-twain-begins-reporting-in-virginia-city>  
Williams, George, III. *Mark Twain: His Life in Virginia City, Nevada*. Tree by the river publishing, Dayton, NV. 1985.

## Cowboy Action Shooting™ Match— June, 2015

**Story line:** In 1867, U.S. Sen. Bill Stewart offered Mark Twain a room in which to write a book and a position as his part time secretary. Stewart called for him early one morning with hair askew and unshaven. In his hand was a packet of letters from the Pacific mail. Stewart exclaimed, “I thought I could trust you. I asked you to handle a bit of correspondence for me. I have dozens of angry letters. What the hell did you write?”



### SCENARIO # 1

### 10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 3+ Shotgun

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle loaded with 10 rounds is staged in window [C]. Shotgun, action open and empty, is also staged in window [C].

Start at window [D] with hands on your pistols. When ready say:

**“ I could be lynched! ”**

At the buzzer, draw your first Pistol and engage the pistol targets 3 and 4 in any order with single and double taps only. Holster pistol. Move to Window [C] pick up rifle and engage all rifle targets in a continuous single-tap Nevada Sweep starting with the leftmost target. Make rifle safe in window sill and pick up shotgun. Knock down all three shotgun targets in any order. Make Shotgun safe. Move to Doorway [B]. Draw second pistol and engage the pistol targets 1 and 2 in any order (with single and double taps only). Reholster pistol. [Those fighting gunfighter style must engage targets 1 and 2 with one pistol and targets 3 and 4 with one pistol]

### SCENARIO # 2

### 10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 2+ Shotgun

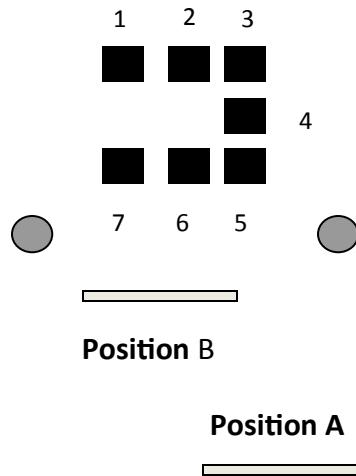
**Story line:** The Senator had given Twain letters from constituents of Baldwin’s Ranch, NV. The letters had implored the Senator to have a post office placed there. Stewart had asked Twain to write a letter gracefully declining to do so, but now the citizens were up in arms. Twain had written to residents and explained that it would do no good to have a post office in their town since none of them could read anyway; and if a letter happened to come through going to somewhere else and if it contained money, that the Senator was sure that it would be misappropriated and that would cause all sorts of mischief. No, it read, I have your best interests at heart. What you need there is not a post office but a very substantial jail...and perhaps a free school. Those would be of lasting benefit to you all.

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle loaded with 10 rounds, is staged in your hands at window [C]. Shotgun, action open and empty, is staged in window [C]. When ready say:

**“What you need here is a jail!”**

At the buzzer, starting at the window [C], engage the rifle targets in a continuous counterclockwise sweep starting with Target R1. No double taps. Make Rifle safe in window. Move to Doorway [B], and with your Pistols, engage the 4 pistol targets in the following order 1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4, ... 1,3. Holster pistols. Move to Window [C] pick up shotgun and knock down 2 of the 3 targets.

## Bay 2



### Scenario 3 — 10 Pistol, 9 Rifle, 2+ Shotgun

Clemens used to write the most outrageous things about parties and social gatherings he didn't even attend. Exasperated, a few townspeople attempted to make amends. They invited him to a party held in his honor to make him feel at home. "He danced with the prettiest girls, monopolized their time...then [strolled] over to the *Enterprise* and lambasted the party for all the English language would allow." He remembered every awkward moment, every stumble made by the guests, every blemish, and broadcast it far and wide.

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle, loaded with 9 rounds is held at cowboy port arms. Shotgun, action open and empty, is staged on the horse. Start at position A.

When ready, say, **"Better grab your pistol, Sam!"**

At the buzzer, from Position A, with your Rifle engage the six horizontally arranged targets with single taps in any order (for example 1,2,3 and then 5,6,7. Then expend your last three rifle rounds by single tapping the **Vertical** targets 3,4 and 5 in any order. **EXCEPT— Remember that if you end on the same horizontal target where you begin your vertical engagement, you are double-tapping a target and thus will earn a procedural penalty.** Make your rifle safe on the horse. With your shotgun, from Position A, knock down both shotgun targets, any order. Make shotgun safe on the Horse. Move to Position B and with your pistols, engage the targets in the following order: 2,3,4,5,6 and then 6,5,4,3,2.

### Scenario 4 — 10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 2+ Shotgun

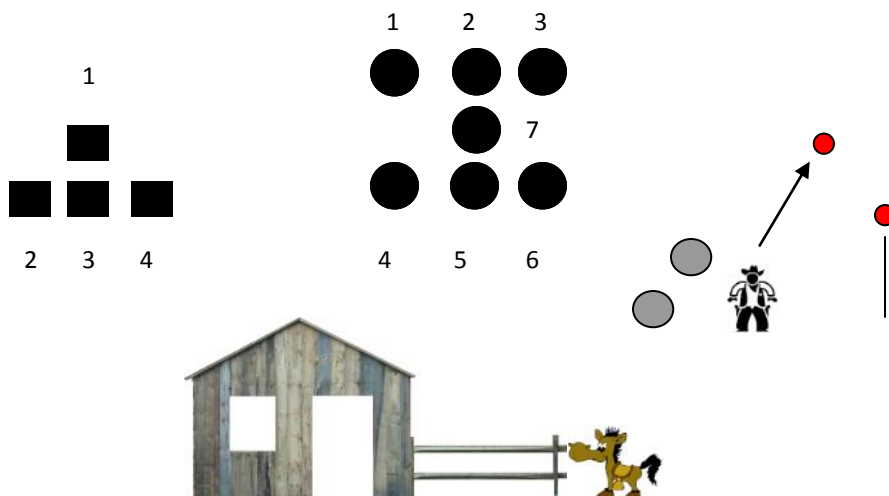
Clemens always was seen with either cigar or pipe. He literally lived in a cloud of tobacco smoke and loved the smell. He said, "[I] came into this world asking for a light...Why my old boy, when they used to tell me I would shorten my life ten years by smoking...they little knew how trivial and valueless I would regard a decade that had no smoking in it!"

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle, loaded with 10 rounds is staged on the Horse. Shotgun is staged in your hands.

Start at Position A. When ready, say: **"You gonna smoke that stogie or draw?"**

At the buzzer, knock down both shotgun targets, first the left one, then the right one. Make Shotgun safe on the Horse. From the Horse, with your Rifle, place 5 shots on either three horizontal sets of targets (1,2,3 or 5,6,7) with single taps, then engage the vertical targets (3,4, and 5) single tapping with the 5 remaining rounds in Any order — **EXCEPT— Remember that if you end on the same horizontal target where you begin your vertical engagement, you are double-tapping a target and thus will earn a procedural penalty.** Move to Position B and with your Pistols, engage the targets with single taps in similar manner that you did with the rifle, first horizontal, then vertical. [Your sequence of engagement with rifle and with pistols will NOT need to be identical].

## Bay 3



### Scenario 5

#### 10 Pistol, 9 Rifle, 3+ Shotgun

Newspapers were often loaded with as much fiction as fact. Clemens wanted to exact revenge on a local corner of the Humboldt Mining District who often refused to forward information on recent deaths in the area. Clemens wrote an article about the discovery of a petrified man that was over 300 years old. The man was reported to have turned to stone as the result of exposure to the elements “at the foot of a limestone cliff.” He reported that contributions were received to blast him loose from the rock and give the man a decent burial. Papers far and wide picked up the story and the coroner received hundreds of letters and telegrams asking when he was going to release the petrified man for burial. Clemens was avenged.

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle, loaded with 9 rounds is staged on the Horse. Shotgun, action open and empty, is also staged on the horse. Start at Window A with your hands on holstered pistols.

When ready, say, “**Let’s give him a decent burial, Sam!**”

At the buzzer, draw your pistols and from Window A, engage the 4 pistol targets in any order, **no double taps**. Reholster pistols. Pick up Rifle and from the rail, engage the targets in the following order, 1,2,3,4,5,6,2,7,5. Make rifle safe on Horse. With your shotgun knock down or break 3 of the 4 targets, in any order. If you chose to engage the popper and the bird, and successfully break the bird, you earn a 5 second bonus. No makeup target is required if you miss the bird, but no bonus is awarded for unbroken bird.

### Scenario 6

#### 10 Pistol, 9 Rifle plus one optional reload, 4+ Shotgun

Clemens left Virginia City for San Francisco, and after a scrape with police, fled to Sonora where he heard of the famous “Leaping Frogs” and came up with his first stand alone story about the Leaping Frog Contest of Calaveras County. Eventually sailing to Hawaii while posting reports to newspapers, Clemens became famous. He started on a lecture circuit and quickly returned to Virginia City to speak, amid great acclaim. He eventually became the warmup act for the Hillary and Bill Clinton Vaudeville Tour.

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Start at Doorway. Rifle loaded with 9 rounds is staged in your hands directed down range. Shotgun, action open and empty, is staged on the horse.

When ready, say: “**Newspapers lie every time!**”

At the buzzer, from the doorway, with your rifle **engage all** of the top targets (1,2,3) and all of the bottom targets (4,5,6) with 9 rounds using single and/or double taps, any order. **For a ten second bonus, you may reload one rifle round and engage the center rifle target (number 7).** Make rifle safe on the horse. Pick up shotgun and from the horse engage the two knock-down targets and the popper and bird. If you do not break the bird, you must break the make-up clay target. Make shotgun safe on Horse. Move to the Window and with your pistols engage all four targets by double tapping in any order.