



North American AstroPhysical Observatory (NAAPO)



Cosmic Search: Issue 10 (Volume 3 Number 2; Spring (Apr., May, June) 1981)

[Article in magazine was found on page 17]

In Review: **Mark Twain in Space**

By: Editors

A book about 75 years old seems like an unlikely subject for a review. But Mark Twain's short novel, **Extract from Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven**, deserves mention, first because it is so prescient and so much fun to read, and second because it is so little known and seems to be ignored in many collections of the great humorist's works.

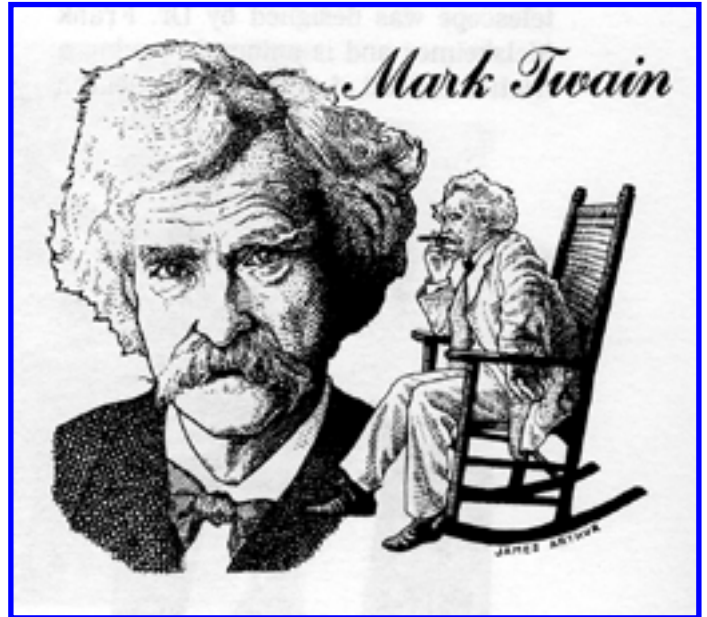
The book begins, "Well, when I had been dead about thirty years I began to get a little anxious."

After sailing along through space those thirty years, old Captain Stormfield came upon a comet and raced it. For the race he altered his course a point or two, but lost out when the comet's captain dumped millions of kazarks of brimstone, wiping out several constellations, and pulled away "like an express train passing a handcar."

Finally, Stormfield spied bright lights ahead, like a fiery furnace. "I guess I've arrived," he said to himself, "and at the wrong place, just as I expected." But the lights turned out to be golden gates. He had gotten to Heaven. But at the wrong gate.

Asked to tell where he came from Stormfield mentioned San Francisco, then California and then the United States but all without any recognition by the angel at the gate. Finally, Stormfield blurted out "I'm from the world." "Which world?" he was asked. "There's millions of them."

That statement, written three-quarters of a century ago shows that Mark Twain was pretty smart in his old age.



[HOME](#)

Copyright © 1981-2006 Big Ear Radio Observatory, North American AstroPhysical Observatory (NAAPO), and Cosmic Quest, Inc.

Designed by Jerry Ehman.

Last modified: June 23, 2006.