

Name _____

Date _____

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

by Mark Twain

∞ He wrote Tom Sawyer

A WORD OF EXPLANATION

1 It was in Warwick Castle that I came across the curious stranger 

whom I am going to talk about. He attracted me by three things: his

candid simplicity, his marvelous familiarity with ancient armor, and the

restfulness of his company—for he did all the talking. We fell together, as

modest people will, in the tail of the herd that was being shown through,

and he at once began to say things which interested me. As he talked

along, softly, pleasantly, flowingly, he seemed to drift away imperceptibly

out of this world and time, and into some remote era and old forgotten

country; and so he gradually wove such a spell about me that I seemed

to move among the specters and shadows and dust and mold of a gray

antiquity, holding speech with a relic of it! Exactly as I would speak of my

nearest personal friends or enemies, or my most familiar neighbors, he

spoke of Sir Bedivere, Sir Bors de Ganis, Sir Launcelot of the Lake, Sir

Galahad, and all the other great names of the Table Round—and how

old, old, unspeakably old and faded and dry and musty and ancient he

came to look as he went on! Presently he turned to me and said, just as

one might speak of the weather, or any other common matter—

"You know about transmigration of souls?" Souls moving? 

I said I had not heard of it. He was so little interested—just as when

people speak of the weather—that he did not notice whether I made

him any answer or not. There was half a moment of silence, immediately

interrupted by the droning voice of the salaried cicerone: Tour guide?

The narrator is touring a castle when he becomes fascinated by a stranger who is unusually familiar with the old armor and relics.

∞ Reminds me of when my grandfather tells stories.

The stranger talked about the knights of the round table as though he knew them. But they lived long ago.

The stranger must read a lot about the knights. Or he is crazy!

The stranger mentions the idea of "migrating" souls, as though it is a common idea.

Is he in a trance?

Name _____

Date _____

4 "Ancient hauberk, ^{Some type of armor} date of the sixth century, time of King Arthur and the Round Table; said to have belonged to the knight Sir Sagamor le Desirous; observe the round hole through the chain-mail in the left breast; can't be accounted for; supposed to have been done with a bullet since invention of firearms—perhaps maliciously by Cromwell's soldiers."

The 6th century armor has a bullet hole

How? There were no guns in the 6th century!

Oh. Was it done much later?

5 My acquaintance smiled—not a modern smile, but one that must have gone out of general use many, many centuries ago—and muttered apparently to himself:

The stranger claims to have shot the bullet hole. The narrator is shocked!

The stranger is old fashioned.

6 "Wit ye well, *I saw it done* ." Then, after a pause, added: "I did it myself." ! ^{How could the stranger have shot a hole in the ancient armor?}

7 By the time I had recovered from the electric surprise of this remark, he was gone.

