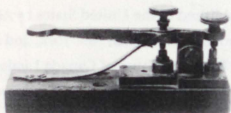


BOOKNOTES
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LIGHTNING MAN

The Accursed Life of Samuel F. B. Morse



KENNETH SILVERMAN

758. Kenneth Silverman

Lightning Man: The Accursed Life of Samuel F.B. Morse

Taped: 12/30/05

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Tape #: 179914

Alfred A. Knopf

New York 2003

Kan Schenck
Washington Square and
Brighton Lake
dot dash ended in 1939
between sleep and shore
last telegram 1960
received for initials who
can't move

What hath God wrought
Susan / Charles / Finley
1st marriage

who was Benjamin West
more friend of Lofgren
James F. Cooper
his children - Susan

Another Richard and Sidney
more defended slavery
hated the Catholics

~~Wrote~~ Morris Depression
Patent - 14 yrs. plus 7

Mr. Charles Jackson
Alfred Vail
F.O.J. Smith
Amos. Kendall
Henry O'Reilly
Joseph Henry - Princeton
Edward Gale Prof.

Sept 13 Moore to Apr 29, 1791 Finley - father preacher
sends him to Phillips Academy in Andover
begins painting at 12

Yale 1805 - he was 14 1/2
Academy record mediocre - quarrel with his mother and father
he was born to science / developed literary interests
his father worried about a world of Infidelism and Unitarianism
worried about Brits and French and Thomas Jefferson
graduated Yale 1810 wanted to be an artist - Finley to London

Chap 2 In London -
Studying painting - Benjamin West - 600 paintings
turn 21 in 1812 - Then when Britain declares war on Brit.
16 ships - 600 for Britain Conquer Britain
Wanted to go to Paris - where he wouldn't find arts - Americans
his parents agreed to support him for an extra year
promised his parents he would not pursue a career as portrait painter
but would pursue history painter
58 day trip from Britain to U.S.

Chap 3 found a wife Aug 1816 - Lucretia Becken Walker
Concord, N. Hampshire she was 17 He 25
All go through conversion to religion
Finley invented piston - applied for patent
began teaching Sunday school p 46
on again off again as a painter and a minister
Finley to Charleston S.C. 27 portraits by mid - March
away from Lucretia for 6 months - she in N. H.
Married Sept 29 - settled in Charleston
next Sept daughter born - 1st child / father has to leave church
larged grounds for Academy (S.C.) of Fine Arts
Paints portrait of James Monroe (p 55)
Lucretia's 2nd child - Had another daughter Elizabeth Ann
House painting - began Nov 1821 paints portraits of 67 Cong. S.C. Justice
the press
She becomes pregnant again
Work on home painting takes longer - Feb / Mar / April
April - Lucretia's daughter Lucretia Ann
Painting exhibited in Boston / Salem / New York City / Albany - no profit
said the painting would ruin him - p 62

Chap 4
Mexico New York City
Lucretia's death - son Charles Walker
Mexico Canceled -
He moves to New York City
another son born - James
Lafayette portrait
Lucretia dies 25 yrs old
3 weeks after giving birth
John Trumbull -
American Academy of Fine Arts of 25
Finley - forms
National Academy of Art Design
1826 Free for 15 year

Chap 4 cont

Father dies

Lafayette's painting completed 845 canon

Had a confrontation with Trumbull

began some more writing - for his brother's Observer
help start Journal of Commerce

1828

Meets Catherine Patterson - father objects to marriage

Now in late 30's - Rome/Paris complete art education

Wanted commission from Congress to paint in Capitol Dome - didn't get it

Kids - Lison/Charles/James

Elinor dies at 62 - children were then placed in different homes
travels to Europe for 3 years - kids aren't happy - he's depressed p 94

Catholicism - popen (rated) p 104 called it all theatre

uprising in Rome - he feared for his life

left Rome for Florence just in time - a warrant was out for his arrest

then to Venice - perfect sloth days dreaming

then to Paris again / worked at Louvre

Painted Grand Gallery of the Louvre p 117 He was 41

Chap 6 Return to New York

Become head of National Academy of Design again

Merge with Trumbull - difficulty

"Grand" exposition a failure

Painted "The House" his 17yr. old daughter Susan

Anti-Catholic articles published in his brother's Observer

1833 - 11 bishops, 135 seminarians, 320 priests

500,000 worshippers

Under name Brutes wrote 12 anti-Cath. articles 1834

Leopold Foundation - Pope Leo XII - Jesuits

National American Democratic Assoc. - Morse became spokesman

Talked into missing for mayor of N.Y.C. (won last field of 4)

Morse didn't get picked as one of 4 to paint rotunda (1837)

Chap 1

Gordon and Sewal - Apr 1837 - 2 Frenchmen in USA to demo telegraph device - Morse says he was working on similar device for 5 yrs.

Morse set to show that he was the inventor of electric telegraph
Idea first came to him on return trip from France Oct, 1832 on Sully
& conversation at dinner with Dr. Charles Jackson, P 153-4

Morse had spent 3 years abroad (Jackson was 28 yrs old)
Jackson said this invention was a mutual discovery

Morse applied for patent Oct 1837

Prof. Leonard Gale showed him how boost power of battery
He recommended Alfred Vail a former student of his (a machinist)
36 yrs old

Vail agreed to help with a "relay" if he could share in profits

1837 - depression - money tight - Sedgwick and Redland help
Vail granted 1/2 interest (Vail family supplies money to project)
first public demo fails 3 1/2 - Morse invents dot dash alphabet
Vail tries to take some credit

Vail felt used - Morse called him assistant - didn't take him
to meet Pres. Van Buren - vain, exploring, ingenious

Morse demos telegraph for Congress and Pres - everyone amazed
Wants govt to fund demo long distance

Commerce Committee Chairman F O J Smith recommended to
Congress expense of 30,000 for 50 mile test. - a public/private venture
Fog Smith wanted to be a partner

Morse agrees to a partnership when Smith says he'll lobby Congress
Morse and Smith go overseas looking for foreign patents
Smith 1/4 interest in American patent Morse 9/10th interest in U.S.

Chap 2 Trip to England to try to get patent for his telegraphs

Morse first to invent "single circuit" and a recording device
Then England turned him down - on to France - met P 179
astronomer/physicist Arago - Morse demo to French Academy
The French "There's no such thing as conscience" - wait
for everything / French famous for not keeping appointments
Russia through Meyerhoff showed interest in telegraphs

chap - 9

Copier would not copy Morse's telegraphs
Became friends with Daquene - made his first Daguerrotype 1839
Morse and Prof. Draper set up shop on NYU campus to do
photo portraits

Did Morse falsely claim to have improved Daquene's process? p. 101
1841 - 3rd Party candidate - ran against Catholics -
The Whigs use tricks to imply that the nation American
party had dropped his candidacy

ALSO BY KENNETH SILVERMAN

Morse became Pres
of American Protestant Union - opposed public funds for
Catholic schools
HOUDINI!!!

After his defeat he
wrote the Press
family in upstate New York
His family thought
he was pompous

Edgar A. Poe: Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance

The Life and Times of Cotton Mather

A Cultural History of the American Revolution

1842 - Susan
and Edward Livingston
Morse was 23

Timothy Dwight

LIGHTNING MAN

chap 11 p 249 - willing to see his patent for \$110,000 9/16th

Sell to govt or private business

Smith despise Morse - issue an appropriation from Congress 100,000
to build Trenton/Philly, Washington/Wash DC via 2 wire

Morse's handling of new business ventures deepened Vail's ^{resentment}
Richard (brother) sick / withdraws from Observer - 10 children

Courtney Aunt Ellsworth

Washington Allston dies suddenly at 63 (1844-45)

Morse awaits Congress for appropriation for Balt to WDC. - 8 months
get 8000 to operate WASH/Balt. Transmission open to public 1d for
Morse lived for personal glory unattainable w/o obdurate & chaotic
to Christ

Amos Kendall meets 41. Feb 1845 - friend of Andrew Jackson
his post master general - writing a biography of Jackson
Morse loathed the market place - turned over financial management

to Kendall - he organized first national telegraph co. -

Magnetic Telegraph Co. & he (Kendall) ran it - Created
agreement with Rochester group - Henry O'Reilly -

Kendall's son William shot dead in Wash DC

Morse decides to go back to Europe after 14 yrs. to see patent
English turn him down - prefer Wheatstone in Paris his
friend Arago couldn't get his country to buy it.

Austrian Prince Metternich lumps it in Morse's devil of
all devils - 320 hrs from Vienna to Prague. p 273

chap 12 46-48 - Returns from Europe

New York to Wash completed
travelling across Hudson River
Berchman declares war with Hayes - takes just 2 1/2 hours
to transmit - surprises the French

O'Reilly gets in trouble with Smith over creation of a private
stock association p 280

O'Reilly wins in court against Kendall and Smith - feels he
can now build water works

O'Reilly continues his attacks on Morse - builds line beyond
St. Louis / on to New Orleans - Columbian telegraph - a competitor

Jan 1846 - two different lines being built / side by side / Louisville
to Nashville - Morse (24 inches) vs. gang of 15
building Columbian line for O'Reilly

Trial in Kentucky - awarded Morse injunction against O'Reilly

BOOKNOTES
2004-02-22

For Benjamin Berkman and Eve Silverman



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[B]

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First Edition

Chap 13 Sarah - 2nd wife - 30 yrs. younger - deaf 1852
3 children - Poughkeepsie - Locust Grove

J.P.A. - blamed for ending his painting days. - P300
He produced 300 canvases - didn't think of himself as a painter
Heliotype - color photography

Morse's telegraph litigated 15x's

Bain sues Morse for patent of telegraph 1849

Bain opened Wall Street office

O'Keilly mid 1850 - Louisville to N.O.

He didn't often leave home / became deeply depressed about
losing his patents - He was often w/ O'Keilly

F.O.J. Smith vs. Hugh Downing - decision on Patent case Oct 50'
Morse vs. Smith in New York City Morse defeated

He blamed the press for wanting cheap transmission - blamed
Govt for bad patent laws. He wanted obscurity after
striking glory 1852 O'Keilly vs. Morse in Supreme Ct. 17 days

six hours on each side - Salmon Chase for O'Keilly

was Morse sole creator of electric wire, Morse's telegraph

His message - lone inventor Feb 1854 - Sup Ct. gave Morse

[Ct 4-3 felt exclusion was too broad] total victory

He got a 7yr. extension on his (already 14 yr.) patent

He had earned \$200,000 profit.

Chap 14 P330

Lytton Field - forms company for Trans Atlantic cable

O'Keilly went bankrupt

Nov 1854 - ran and lost as a Dem. for Congress

abandoned Catholicism

1200 miles Ireland / Newfoundland / New York completed

Field asks Morse to travel with him overseas -

Morse begins to distrust Field - thinks he's competing
against him with Daniel Huggins telegraph co.

Chap 15 Russian saluted him / as did Brits but American
did and worked him - preyed on him with "the Napoleonic
of a money worshipping society"

2500 miles of laying cable - out of England / Ireland - Morse
injures his leg again P360

1st message James Buchanan from Queen Victoria

Cable snaps 300 miles out / Morse accused Mr. Bright

others say Morse criticism irresponsible

Atlantic Telegraph put off new expeditions for 6 months

Chap 16 Forward

Field - dumps Morse -
Begin 2nd Telegraph line from Europe
Trip to Paris with Sarah and 15 members of the family
Aug 23rd - 1st trans Atlantic telegraph message sent p 374
On Oct 20 after over 700 messages the lines went dead
Spent winter in Puerto Rico with Susan and Ed
Returned home to Fort Grove in May

he ends contract with Foy Smith - after 20 years

Vail dies at 52 - family claim money receiving magnet
paid widow #5000
Charles Page claimed Morse didn't invent telegraph but it was Wheatstone, Henry and himself - Page was Examiner in Patent office (848 Patent)

"life took on many contradictions and reversals" p 383
Morse's Magnetic Telegraph (his first company) was excluded in 1857 from six "nations" of the North American Telegraph Association

In 1863 - Morse's tax returns show him earning \$29,928
friends tried to get him to run for President in 1860

Chap 17 Was against Civil War - hated Lincoln
Campaigning vigorously for George W. Clifton
at time of Ft. Sumter - he was 16 yrs. old - 1 child in ages 4 to 42

Slavery he said was ordained by God - a Bible theory
Meansville - military on both sides used his invention
the telegraph - 6 1/2 million messages in north
Meansville - first transcontinental message sent from
San Francisco, Calif. to Lincoln Oct 24, 1861

Chap 18 Paris

Honorary Commission
International
Exposition

Report to Congress
explaining

headed home near 80
Japan / Jan 1871 China
finally put telegraph in
use -

Big dinner put on by
Western Union -
they now had
37,000 miles
2000 stations

Using Morse's system
govt. wanted to start own
he completed report to
Congress (300) pages

1862 - again taking
credit for telegraph (\$32)

Proposed - two States
National Monument Assoc.
in Wash.

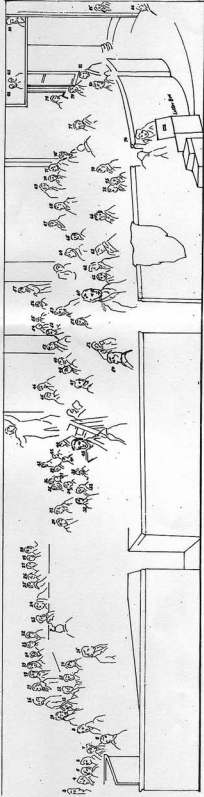
② Western Union in NYC.
suspension of post
office proposal

Vail widow -
only one mention in
more speech at Academy
of Music -

Central Park's statue
The Cabot Act out to take
away credit from Morse
for telegraph -

Wrote statue in Wash. D.C.
died Apr. 1872

Henry O'Reilly
Alfred Vail
Foj (Fog) Smith
Joseph Henry



Key to Meneses Reminiscence of the House of Representatives

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
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| 2. Austin, Speaker | 15. Ebenezer Hooper, Conn. | 28. Judge Marshall | 41. Richard Mifflin, N.Y. | 55. C. Smith, Va. | 79. John M. Williams, Va. |
| 3. Sumner, Speaker-in-Abs. | 16. Willingboro, Conn. | 29. Judge Story | 42. Charles Mifflin, N.Y. | 56. John P. Smith, Va. | 80. Henry Williams, Va. |
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| 10. Phillip Schreiner, Va. | 23. John W. Campbell, Miss. | 36. James Porter, Conn. | 49. James Blair, N.C. | 63. John P. Smith, Va. | |
| 11. Douglass, Late Clerk | 24. James Mifflin, N.Y. | 37. James Porter, Conn. | 50. John Sims, Va. | 64. James Mifflin, N.Y. | |
| 12. James Smith, Md. | 25. Hugh Holmes, Va. | 38. James Porter, Conn. | 51. John Sims, Va. | 65. William Mifflin, N.Y. | |
| 13. William Smith, Va. | 26. Hugh Holmes, Va. | 39. Edward More, Ala. | 52. C. C. Calhoun, N.Y. | | |

Thomas Tall 1807-1826
 GARREL DUVAL 1814-1835
 MICHAEL WALKER 1798-1829
 HENRY LIVINGSTON 1806-1823
 JOHN MARSHALL 1801-1835
 JOE STORY 1811-1845

67 Cong. session
 1819
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 1850

from the files of
 the Corcoran
 Gallery of Art.

1811-1823
 Johnson, S.C.
 Williams 1834





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Samuel F.B. Morse

Samuel Finley Breese Morse is known for his invention of the first successful telegraph in the United States. He also invented the Morse code. He played an important role in the field of telecommunications making it possible for people to communicate from long distances.

27 April 1791 Samuel Finley Breese Morse was born in Charlestown, Massachusetts.

1810 Samuel graduated from Yale.

1811 Samuel studied art abroad. He studied with Benjamin West and Washington Allston in London.

1813 Morse completed his first and only sculpture. It was of the dying Hercules. He won a gold medal for it in the Adelpi Society of Arts competition.

1815 Morse returned home.

1822 Morse completed a painting of the House of Representatives in session. Portraits of more than 80 members were recognizable.

1826 Along with 30 others, Morse helped to found the National Academy of Design. Morse was chosen as its president.

1827 Morse attended a series of lectures on electricity at Columbia University.

1829-1832 Morse traveled in Europe working on his artistic technique.

42 **1832** Morse became a professor of painting and sculpture at the University of the City of New York.

1832 Morse theorized in his diary that "intelligence" could be transmitted at a distance by electricity.

1836 Morse ran for mayor of New York City. He lost.

→ **1836** Morse began working on the telegraph with Leonard 42

Gale.

1837 After not obtaining the commission to paint historical murals in the Rotunda of the Capitol in Washington D.C., Morse shifted his attention to the telegraph. He did not paint again.

1837 Morse and Gale built an electromagnetic telegraph based on the work of Joseph Henry. It could send messages 10 miles on wire strung around their workroom.

1837 Alfred Vail became another partner. He agreed to finance their work.

1837 Congress sought proposals for a long distance telegraph system which would connect New York City with New Orleans. Morse proposed an electric system. Congress would not advance funds for the line.

6 January 1838 Morse first publicly demonstrated his telegraph, in Morristown, New Jersey.

1840 Morse was granted a patent for his telegraph.

1841-1842 During the session of Congress, they failed to act on Morse's telegraph bill.

52 **1842** The Committee of Commerce finally gave Morse a favorable report.

1843 He was granted \$30,000 to build a test line between Washington D.C. and Baltimore.

24 May 1844 Morse tapped out the message, "What hath God wrought!" while demonstrating

1846 Private companies built long distance lines between Boston and Buffalo.

1847 Morse bought a home, which he called Locust Grove.

64 **1854** Morse ran for Congress but lost.

69 **1859** Morse and his partner sold their patent rights.

1871 Morse was honored for his work with the telegraph with a statue of him in Central Park in New York City.

80 **2 April 1872** Morse died of pneumonia

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