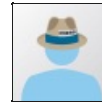


<p>Magazine section of <i>The Sunday Press</i>, Vestal Parkway East, Binghamton, N.Y. 13902.</p> <p>Darrel Burkhardt, editor</p> <p>Profile.....2 From rags to britches3 Quiz, Jumble, Crossword.....6 At home7 Specialty of the house.....8</p> <p>2—Binghamton, N.Y.—The Sunday Press, Aug. 16, 1981</p>	<h2>Cooperslayer</h2> <p>We hadn't meant to spread it around, but with this week's story on the textiles show at Fenimore House, it's hard to avoid the subject of James Fenimore Cooper. And the word is that the famous novelist wasn't exactly a master of the craft of writing.</p> <p>Take Mark Twain's word for it. In a venomous essay, <i>Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses</i>, he observed that "Cooper's art has some defects. In one place in <i>Deerslayer</i>, and in the restricted space of two-thirds of a page, Cooper has scored 114 offenses against literary art out of a possible 115. It breaks the record."</p> <p>After citing some qualities of litera-</p>	<p>ture, Twain showed how Cooper's work possessed none of them. And, "Cooper hadn't any more invention than a horse; and I don't mean a high-class horse, either; I mean a clothes-horse . . .</p> <p>"Cooper's eye was splendidly inaccurate. Cooper seldom saw anything correctly. He saw nearly all things as through a glass eye, darkly."</p> <p>And then Mark Twain started listing examples of Cooper's poor sense of words. In six pages of <i>Deerslayer</i>, said Twain, Cooper uses "verbal" for "oral"; "precision" for "facility"; "phenomena" for "marvels"; "necessary" for "predetermined"; "unsophisticated" for "primitive"; "preparation" for "expectancy"; "rebuked" for "subdued"; "de-</p>	<p>pendent on" for "resulting from" and so on and on.</p> <p>You get the idea. Sorry about that, Cooperstown.</p> <p>—Darrel Burkhardt</p> <p>CLARIFICATION: In last week's At Home feature, it was stated that Martin Dardis was involved in the Watergate investigation. Barbara Dardis was then quoted, "We were literally forced out of Miami because of a contract on his life." The "contract" was a result of a drug investigation, and had no connection with Watergate.</p> <p>ON THE COVER: A 19th century patchwork quilt is part of a major exhibit on textiles at Cooperstown's Fenimore House. The story begins on the next page. (Photo by John Guglielmi).</p>
--	---	--	--

Mark Twain on James Fenimore Cooper



Clipped By:

bob_thomas_wk
Tue, Sep 13, 2022