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Dramatic Publishing

TOM SAWYER

Adapted by

RIC AVERILL

From the book by

MARK TWAIN



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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(TOM SAWYER)

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Tom Sawyer is dedicated to the “rough and tumble” earliest Seem-To-Be Players founders and lifelong friends, Jeanne Averill, Jeff and Beth Dearing, Laurie and Charles McLane-Higginson, Annie Mahoney, Jeff Tamblyn, Roger Nolan, David Naster, Sarah Hendricks, Bill Opperman, Eric Wolfe, Tere Lee, Doug and Cheryl Weaver, Heather Laird and others we met along the way.

* * * *

Tom Sawyer originated as a two-person touring show and was later expanded to a five-person professional touring production performed by the Seem-To-Be Players, Lawrence, Kansas. The production begged for an opportunity to expand to two acts with a full cast of age-appropriate actors. The premiere production of the full-cast version was performed on “Leap Day,” February 29, 2008, at the Lawrence Arts Center with a combined professional, community and youth cast featuring the following performers and crew:

CAST:

TOM SAWYER	David Petr
HUCK FINN	Jacob Leet
BECKY THATCHER	Emma Davison
AUNT POLLY	Jennifer Glenn
SID	Jayke Workman
COUSIN MARY	Sally Spurgeon
BEN ROGERS	Evan Weisgrau
AMY LAWRENCE	Noelle Olson
MISS DOBBINS	Nora Cox

MUFF POTTER	Ron Willis
INJUN JOE	Travis Berkley
DOC ROBINSON	Craig West
JOE HARPER	Riley Davis
ALFRED TEMPLE	George Runyan
PREACHER	Steve Shapiro
JUDGE THATCHER	Mike Cooper
DEACON BROWN	David Hollond
PETER BROWN	Sterling Hollond
MOLLY BROWN	Calder Hollond
TOMMY BARNES	Zack Hoar
BILLY FISHER	Jakob Walter
JOHNNY MILLER	Michael Jacobson
JEFF THATCHER	Grant Ahlvers
WILLIE MUFFERSON	Keegan West
SAMUEL RICE	Ben Novorr
CLARA RICE	Kaitlyn Johnson
IMOGENE FISHER	Courtney Cooper
GRACIE MILLER	Nicole Berkley
SALLY ROGERS	Madelyn Johnson
SUSY HARPER	Kendra Leet
GINNY WALTERS	Blue O’Leary
RACHEL EATON	Jodi Moore
MISS MILLER	Abby Olker
MISS PETERS	Cassidy Farwell
MRS. HARPER	Karin Barrett

METHODIST GIRLS:

HOLLY Shoshi Rosen
KITTY Celie Davison
JEAN Maria Ferrara
NAOMI Molly Weisgrau

MUSICIANS:

Fiddle, Cello, Bass - Ric Averill
Mandolin - Brian Stuparyk
Guitar, Dobro - Michael T. Bradley

Director Ric Averill
Assistant Director Rachael Perry
Stage Manager Danny Rogovein
Costumer Jennifer Glenn
Set Design Ric Averill, Danny Rogovein
Set Build Danny Rogovein
Stage Manager Danny Rogovein
Assistant Stage Manager Pamina Buechner
Light Board Operator Sidney Kaiser
Light Board Operator Tim Rosenboom
Technical Director Lee Saylor

TOM SAWYER

Large-cast adaptation for age-appropriate actors

CHARACTERS

TOM SAWYER . . . the most mischievous boy in St. Petersburg,
Missouri
HUCK FINN Tom's best friend
BECKY THATCHER Tom's girlfriend, new to town
AUNT POLLY Tom's aunt who has taken him in
SID Aunt Polly's spoiled son
COUSIN MARY Sid's very religious cousin
BEN ROGERS. a bully, new to town, who becomes one of
Tom's gang
AMY LAWRENCE. Tom's first and former true love
MISS DOBBINS Tom's teacher
MUFF POTTER the town drunk
INJUN JOE. the town criminal
DOC ROBINSON the town's eccentric doctor
JOE HARPER Tom and Huck's second in command of the
boys' gang
ALFRED TEMPLE well dressed and smart, loves Becky
Thatcher
PREACHER the town's principal religious leader
JUDGE THATCHER the town's new judge, Becky's father
DEACON BROWN . . . the new Methodist minister, head of the
orphans' home
PETER BROWN* . . the deacon's son, later a member of Tom's
gang
MOLLY BROWN* . . the deacon's daughter, later a school child

TOMMY BARNES* . . . the youngest member of the boys' gang
 JEFF THATCHER. . . Becky's brother, becomes a member of the
 boys' gang
 BILLY FISHER* a member of the boys' gang
 JOHNNY MILLER* a member of the boys' gang
 WILLIE MUFFERSON* a member of the boys' gang
 SAMUEL RICE* a member of the boys' gang
 CLARA RICE one of Becky's friends, a schoolgirl
 IMOGENE FISHER one of Becky's friends, a schoolgirl
 GRACIE MILLER one of Becky's friends, a schoolgirl
 SALLY ROGERS. one of Becky's friends, a schoolgirl
 SUSY HARPER* one of Becky's friends, a schoolgirl
 GINNY WALTERS* one of Becky's friends, a schoolgirl
 RACHEL EATON* one of Becky's friends, a schoolgirl
 MISS MILLER* one of the town's ladies
 MISS PETERS* one of the town's ladies
 MRS. HARPER* one of the town's ladies

METHODIST GIRLS:*

RUTH
 RUBY
 KITTY
 NAOMI
 STELLA
 HOLLY
 JEAN
 MYRTLE

TOWNSEOPLE, MUSICIANS AND OTHERS AS NEEDED

*Can be played by girls or boys, can be doubled or cut

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE: *A steamboat landing and playing hooky.*

A unit set with a large backdrop that shows the wide Mississippi River receding into the background. Various gables and cutout rooftops hang at angles to suggest an organized small town of the mid-1800s, St. Petersburg, Missouri. Specific set pieces will help designate individual scenes, including a porch for AUNT POLLY, a picket fence in need of whitewashing, a few gravestones, a raft, a bush, a tree, student benches and a slate board for the school, a pulpit for the church and a judges' bench at the trial. The action moves in seamless fashion from one scene to another, areas lit as they are used. Bluegrass music, live or recorded, may help with the transitions from scene to scene and add atmosphere.

MUSIC. There is a hustle and bustle as the town comes to life. An OFFSTAGE VOICE yells.

VOICE. Mark Twain! Mark Twain!

(There is a cry from the gathering crowd. A steamboat is approaching. Sounds of the steamboat; its whistle, ropes, splashing, the paddlewheel. Groups that gather in the town include AUNT POLLY, her spoiled child, SID, their

COUSIN MARY, visiting from St. Louis. PREACHER CHARLES enters with MRS. HARPER, followed by JOE and SUSY, her children. A group of town BOYS including BILLY FISHER, JOHNNY MILLER, WILLIE MUFFERSON, SAMUEL RICE and TOMMY BARNES mill about together. AMY LAWRENCE is dogging the heels of MISS DOBBINS, her teacher, and other GIRLS including CLARA RICE, IMOGENE FISHER, GRACIE MILLER, SALLY ROGERS, GINNY WALTERS and RACHEL EATON tag along. MISS MILLER and MISS PETERS watch the gathering with the very obedient and proper ALFRED TEMPLE at their side. DOC ROBINSON steps out of his office and watches, quietly.)

COUSIN MARY. Steamboat! It's a steamboat!

TOMMY BARNES. Chug-a-lug! Toot! Toot!

COUSIN MARY. See, Miss Dobbins—they's passengers waitin' to disengage.

MISS DOBBINS. Disembark, Mary.

COUSIN MARY. That's what I meant!

AUNT POLLY. Could be the new judge, I reckon.

(There is a murmur from the crowd as they speculate on who the new arrivals might be.)

PREACHER CHARLES. Our good cousin Deacon Brown's to be here soon with his charges from the Methodist home. Could be him.

CLARA RICE. Bet it is, Reverend. Look, a whole passel of little girls! There, on the deck.

RACHEL EATON. And they's all dressed alike...them's Methodists, sure enough.

(All get excited and point about upstage.)

SID. Aunt Polly?

AUNT POLLY. What is it, Sid?

SID. Where's Tom Sawyer?

AUNT POLLY. Goodness, I don't know. School, I reckon.

SID. Can't be—everyone from school's here watchin' the steamboat come in.

AUNT POLLY *(looks around)*. Well, so they are. Now you've set me all to worryin'. Maybe he went on to home.

SID. Hey, Billy Fisher, was Tom misbehavin' in school today?

(BILLY and a couple of the other BOYS look over at SID.)

BILLY FISHER. Who wants to know?

(The BOYS look at one another like conspirators, refusing to tell that their friend was playing hooky.)

SID. Aunt Polly.

JOHNNY MILLER. Ast Tom, 'spect he's on his way home from school now.

SID. He 'uz misbehavin' again, Aunt Polly, I swear.

AUNT POLLY. How can he misbehave if he was just walkin' down the street from school?

SID. Oh, ma'am, you know Tom. He can misbehave jist from the look on his face.

SALLY ROGERS. It's at the dock! Steamboat's dockin'!!

(There is a rush as everyone presses forward. TOM SAWYER comes running on, stops when he sees the commotion. His gang turns, JOE HARPER quickly leaves his mother and sister. The others move toward the steamboat dock, upstage.)

JOE HARPER. You'd best be careful, Tom. Sid's got it in for you and he knows you played hooky.

(AMY LAWRENCE moves from the crowd and drifts within earshot of TOM and JOE.)

TOM SAWYER. How was I to hep it, Joe? *(He shows off a bit.)* Mississippi River was singing to me. "Tom, Tom, come swim in my cool waters!" And when a beautiful woman like the Mississippi River sings out to me, I just gotta be polite and answer.

AMY LAWRENCE. Yer awful romantical for a boy, Tom Sawyer.

TOM SAWYER. Thank you, Amy Lawrence.

(TOM does a courtly bow. There is a big cheer and the crowd comes back on. In the center is JUDGE THATCHER, flanked by his children, BECKY and JEFF. Behind him is DEACON BROWN, with his two children, MOLLY and PETER. BEN ROGERS is also among the new arrivals. PREACHER CHARLES gathers everyone's attention. Entering at the sides of the crowd, almost unnoticed, are HUCK FINN on one side, MUFF POTTER and INJUN JOE on the other. PREACHER CHARLES clears his throat.)

PREACHER CHARLES. Citizens of St. Petersburg, Missouri. Hallelujah and amen.

CROWD. Hallelujah and amen!

PREACHER CHARLES. We are pleased to welcome to our fair flower of the Mississippi some wayfaring strangers in a strange land—which shall not be long strange to them as we open our hearts with— (*Looks up.*) His most generous love. Samaritans we shall be. I welcome Deacon Brown and the sweet orphan girls he has brought to occupy the new Methodist home.

(Crowd welcomes all.)

DEACON BROWN. All the way from sinful Cincinnati, the good leaders of the church heard the call from St. Petersburg—a welcome home for these lovely ladies as they train for lives of bein' Godfearing women ready to grow into the Rachels and Ruths who will help populate the Western Expansion of this great land.

PREACHER CHARLES. Here, here, and amen.

CROWD. Amen.

PETER BROWN. Can I play?

DEACON BROWN. Oh, yes, Oh, yes, I present my own children, Peter and Molly.

(PETER runs off and finds some other BOYS. MOLLY lifts a hand in a shy hello.)

MOLLY BROWN. Er, hi...

(COUSIN MARY runs up and takes her hand.)

COUSIN MARY. Come on, we'll meet you up with some of the girls.

DEACON BROWN. And, of course, my lovely charges.

(As he introduces the GIRLS, they each curtsy and say "charmed," very politely. Note: You may use anywhere from four to eight METHODIST GIRLS. With fewer, simply distribute lines.)

DEACON BROWN *(cont'd)*. Ruth,

RUTH. Charmed.

DEACON BROWN. Stella,

STELLA. Charmed.

DEACON BROWN. Ruby,

RUBY. Charmed.

DEACON BROWN. Holly,

HOLLY. Charmed.

DEACON BROWN. Kitty,

KITTY *(gets flustered, blurts out)*. Oh, uh, hi, y'all.

DEACON BROWN *(clears his throat, then)*. Jean,

JEAN. *Enchanté*.

DEACON BROWN. Speaks French.

PREACHER CHARLES. Ah.

DEACON BROWN. Naomi,

NAOMI. Charmed.

DEACON BROWN. And Myrtle.

MYRTLE. I...

(MYRTLE bursts into tears. MISS MILLER and MISS PETERS step forward and cradle MYRTLE. ALFRED TEMPLE steps forward as well.)

MISS MILLER. There, there. You'll be all right.

MISS PETERS. You'll love it here.

ALFRED TEMPLE. Let's get their bags! Come on, boys.

(The BOYS are reluctant, ALFRED moves toward the steamboat.)

PREACHER CHARLES. In honor of our new arrivals, we'll have a picnic, following the annual Bible Verse Competition, a week from Sunday. Deacon, will you bring the Methodist girls to join us?

DEACON BROWN. You may be a Baptist, but I do believe we share the same Bible. *(There is a ripple of laughter among the adults.)*

ALFRED TEMPLE. The bags, boys?

PREACHER CHARLES. Not so fast, Alfred, though you are a good lad. Ladies and gentlemen, we also greet our new Judge Thatcher. *(Greetings from all.)*

JUDGE THATCHER. My thanks, my thanks. And I present my children, Jeff and Becky.

(He ushers them forward. JEFF looks over at TOM, HUCK has moved up behind him, JEFF nods at them.)

HUCK FINN *(to TOM)*. He looks bully. Get him in the gang.

TOM SAWYER. Yeah, but look at her.

AMY LAWRENCE *(who is still near TOM)*. No, you don't.

(She thwacks him. He laughs. SID notices.)

SID. Aunt Polly, there's Tom!

AUNT POLLY. Tom Sawyer!

(The crowd looks around, realizes TOM may be in trouble. TOM sizes up the situation.)

TOM SAWYER. Come on, gang, let's help— *(draws out the name in a ridiculous fashion)* —“Alfred” with the bags.

(There is a quick hustle and bustle as many bags are grabbed. TOM loses himself in the crowd. During the bustle TOM brushes awkwardly past BEN ROGERS. Everyone chatters and greets one another, leading the METHODIST GIRLS off one way, the THATCHERS off the other. Gradually the scene empties. When everyone has left, TOM comes back on alone, whistling. He walks gingerly toward his house. He starts to climb up a back way to his room, when AUNT POLLY appears, SID at her heels. COUSIN MARY follows them, sits and reads her verses.)

AUNT POLLY. Tom Sawyer, weren't you a gentleman, showing up in time to help take folks' baggage 'round town.

TOM SAWYER. Yes, ma'am, Cousin Mary's always tellin' me the Bible says them what helps others helps themselves.

(COUSIN MARY sticks her tongue out at TOM.)

AUNT POLLY. Is that so?

SID. Ask him about school, Aunt Polly.

TOM SAWYER. Sid, I'm gonna...

AUNT POLLY. Tom, I suspect it was middling warm in school, aren't it?

TOM SAWYER. Yes'm.

AUNT POLLY. Powerful warm, warn't it?

TOM SAWYER. Yes'm.

AUNT POLLY. Didn't you want to go in a-swimming, Tom?

TOM SAWYER. No'm— Well, not very much.

SID. Aunt Polly?

AUNT POLLY. Yes, Sid?

SID. Then ask him why his shirt's so wet.

TOM SAWYER. Uh, uh, uh...

AUNT POLLY. Tom Sawyer, is your shirt wet?

TOM SAWYER. It's very hot. I was a-sweatin'?

AUNT POLLY. Sid, he was a-sweatin'.

SID. I'll bet he was. I would be too, if I'd played hooky.

AUNT POLLY. Tom? Did you now?

TOM SAWYER. Heck, how could I've been playin' hooky when I learnt so much today.

AUNT POLLY. What did you learn?

TOM SAWYER. That Sid's a tattletale. (*Starts to jump SID, POLLY holds him back.*)

AUNT POLLY. You're a-goin' to school tomorrow, Tom, and just to make sure you don't go nowhere else; you're wearin' your Sunday-best jacket and it better come home clean! Sid, get his jacket.

COUSIN MARY. You know you'll go to the burnin' place if you quote scripture unnecessarily, Tom.

TOM SAWYER. Oh, is that so?

SID. Here you are, Tom. (*Hands him his jacket.*) Mind your manners.

TOM SAWYER (*grabs it roughly*). You mind yours.

AUNT POLLY (*points to the fence*). You get into any more trouble and you'll be whitewashin' that fence instead of playing this Saturday mornin'. (*She leaves.*)

SID. I know who's gonna whitewash that fence!

TOM SAWYER. You!

(SID runs off. TOM chasing him. Lights go down as they all go into the house.)

SCENE TWO: *School, a fight after and a whitewashed fence.*

MUSIC takes us from a night to a daytime scene. All kids except HUCK FINN and the METHODIST GIRLS are "in school," seated in chairs with their slates. At the front of the school is MISS DOBBINS, the teacher, and the new student BEN ROGERS.

BEN ROGERS. So after my daddy sold the three banks, I moved from Cairo, Illinois, to stay here with my uncle and aunt till he gets back from exploring all of Africa. (*Murmur of awe from the BOYS, "eww" from the GIRLS.*)

MISS DOBBINS. Thank you, Ben.

(BEN sits near BOYS. JEFF THATCHER nods at him, the BOYS are bonding.)