

Mark Twain

Harry Belafonte

Many years ago on the Mississippi riverboats
They had men called gaugers
And the job of a gauger was to hang off
the side of the boat with one hand
And in the other hand he had a ball of twine
with a hunk a lead on the end of it
He'd wield the lead above his head
And let it fly into the river
Wherever the water marked the twine
He'd call up to the skipper and say
Marking on the twine is four fathoms

'Cause then and there, year after year
It was getting pretty monotonous
Until in the 18 hundreds a little man
Came along and revolutionized the
Whole gauging industry
Instead of saying marking on the twine
He cut it short and said Mark twain

And in between each marking he'd
Fill it in with a little pattern about himself
And his every day life
Well if you'd been livin' at that time
Coming up from a distance on the Mississippi
It would have sounded like this

Mark Twain four fathoms off the starboard bow
I got a gal named Cindy-Lou
Feeds me gin and bake beans too
Mark Twain, Mark Twain
Three fathoms off the starboard bow
I got a friend his name is Pete,
sings dirty songs down on Beel street
Mark Twain, Mark Twain
two fathoms off the starboard bow
I've been working the river since '92
I get a penny a day and bad liquor too
Mark Twain I won't save my money
Till the day I die
They gonna bury me all but my good right eye
Mark twain, Mark Twain
No fathoms off the starboard bow
Look out skipper pull it to the side
You gonna bust your bow and split your hide
Oh great God we done run it down
Skipper gonna chase me with a big blood hound
Mark Twain