



## The Letters of Jack London: Vol. 1: 1896-1905; Vol. 2: 1906-1912; Vol. 3: 1913-1916, Standard set (Studies in International Policy)

By Jack London

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Jack London has long been recognized as one of the most colorful figures in American literature. From his birth in San Francisco in 1876 until his death in 1916, he lived a life rich with experiences and emotional intensity. Factory worker at 14; able-bodied seaman at 17; hobo and convict at 18; "Boy Socialist" of Oakland at 19; Klondike argonaut at 21; the "American Kipling" at 24, renowned author, social crusader, journalist, and war correspondent at 28; world traveler and adventurer at 31; prize-winning stock-breeder and scientific farmer at 35; self-made millionaire by the time of his death at 40: the facts became a legend in London's own lifetime.

In less than 20 years, London produced some 500 non-fiction pieces, 200 short stories, and 19 novels (over 50 books in all). Of these books, at least three (*The Call of the Wild*, *White Fang*, and *The Sea Wolf*) have become world classics. London is America's most widely translated authors (into more than 80 languages), and although his works have been neglected until recently by academic critics, he is finally winning recognition as a major figure in American literary history.

Comprising 1,554 carefully annotated letters, this three-volume work is the first full-scale, comprehensive collection of London's correspondence. The image that emerges from London's letters is of an unpretentious, often sensitive human being, extraordinarily open and sometimes brutally candid. He was capable of writing deeply moving, poetic love letters, but he was also capable, when writing to or about those he considered enemies, of a dark bitterness and vicious invective. Like most of his published work, many of his letters were simply good reading, written with his characteristic verve and blunt wit.

This edition is lavishly illustrated, including 112 photographs, most of them from the London Family albums and many published for the first time.

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## **Editorial Review**

From Library Journal

This is a carefully footnoted selection of 1500 letters that London wrote to friends and lovers, publishers and aspiring writers, and many other people. Covering all aspects of the author-adventurer's life, the correspondence is certainly charged with energy—often cocky, combative, even vindictive. However, few of these letters are very remarkable for style or depth of thought. London's reflections on the literary scene are usually mercenary; half the letters relate to his publishing contracts and financial needs. Aside from most university collections, then, libraries should find the one-volume *Letters from Jack London* (1965) more than adequate. Donald Ray, Manhattanville Coll. Lib., Purchase, N.Y.

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Review

"Like progressive frames of movie film, the gradually changing tone of the letters mirrors the subtle phases from young dreamer to cynical and dying man." (*Houston Post*)

"With the long-awaited publication of *The Letters of Jack London*, the author's life is finally unveiled. . . . The three-volume set offers a rare glimpse into this enigmatic life. . . . Fascinating and inspiring to read, the letters are clever, honest, poetic, and profound." (*San Francisco Chronicle*)

"The editors, in their selection and annotation, have not disappointed. . . . There are also 112 illustrations—photos, drawings, and maps—which, taken together, represent the only truly dependable "biography" of London we have to date." (*Rocky Mountain News*)

"*The Letters of Jack London* is extremely well-done and informative. . . . It makes an effective biographical package." (*London Review of Books*)

"More than 1,500 of London's letters, following the supercharged life of the American writer who published 50 books and lived like a whirlwind in the space of only 40 years." (*New York Times Book Review*)

"A monumental scholarly achievement. . . . Angry, bitter, loving, kvetching about money problems, the letters—candid snapshots of London's literary brilliance—for the most part sting, captivate, and amuse." (*The Kirkus Reviews*)

"For knowing London, his letters are essential. Here, in three volumes of more than 1,700 pages, edited unobtrusively but with scrupulously full and informative annotation—is God's plenty. . . . Almost all are meaty affairs about what he was thinking, doing, and writing. . . . In these three handsomely produced and superbly edited volumes, is Jack London in full, warts and all, and in all his richness and complexity." (*Washington Post*)

"For the first time since Jack London died in 1916 at the age of 40, the story of his remarkable life and career emerges in his own words with the publication of hundreds of his letters that have never before seen print. . . . The letters, more than 1,500 in all, underscore the comment by critic Alfred Kazin in *On Native Grounds*: "The greatest story Jack London ever wrote was the story he lived.'" (*The Progressive*)

From the Inside Flap

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## **Users Review**

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**Emma Lavigne:**

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