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## ABSTRACT

Jack London is not just an author of dog stories. He is according to some literary critics, one of the greatest writers in the world. His stories are read worldwide more than any other American author, alive or dead, and he is considered by many as the American finest author.

This work presents Jack London as a man who is valiant, wise, adventurous, a good worker, and a dreamer who tries to achieve his goals. He shows that poverty is not an obstacle to get them. His youth experiences inspire him to create his literary works. His work exemplifies traditional American values and captures the spirit of adventure and human interest.

His contribution to literature is great. We can find in his collection of works a large list of genders like

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novels, short stories, non-fiction, and autobiographical memoirs. These genres contain a variety of literary styles, adventure, drama, suspense, humor, and even romance. Jack London gets the materials of his books from his own adventures; his philosophy was a product of his own experiences; his love of life was born from trips around the world and voyages across the sea. Through this work we can discover that the key of London's greatness is universality that is his work is both timely and timeless.

**Key Words:** Life, Literature, Work, Contribution, Legacy.

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**FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA, LETRAS Y CIENCIAS  
DE LA EDUCACIÓN**

**ESCUELA DE LENGUA INGLESA**

**“JACK LONDON, HIS LIFE, WORK AND LEGACY”**

Tesis previa a la obtención del  
Título de Licenciada en  
Ciencias de la Educación en la  
Especialización de Lengua y  
Literatura Inglesa.

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## DEDICATION

To my beloved parents, my husband, and  
my little girl, Paula. To all those who have  
always encouraged and given me the  
support I required to do this work.

Thanks to you.

Elena

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To my beloved parents, my sister,  
and brother who have been my guide  
and support every day to give me the  
chance to succeed in life.

Thanks so much.

Eugenia

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## INTRODUCTION

The following work presents one of the first and famous writers in the United States named Jack London whose work and style show to his readers his philosophy of life. The Call of the Wild is one of his famous novels which conveys a beautiful and extraordinary setting. In addition, this work shows his valuable contribution and legacy to the American literature.

Jack London is a brave and adventurous man who has a truly dynamic and challenging life. London is proud of his days as a pioneer, even though he is a poor man in the time he lives (1876-1916). Besides, at this time, his country is facing cultural and economic hard days, but only Jack London, with his

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great physical strength, his intense intellect, and his turbulent spirit, is able to successfully live up to it.

London shows that poverty is not an obstacle in achieving his goals. His childhood experiences and his journeys to Hawaii and the frozen Antarctic in the Yukon inspire him to create his literary works. He has written fifty books, hundreds of stories, thousands of articles, letters, compositions, non-fictions, autobiographical memoirs, and plays. London is widely known for his personal exploits. He is combative, and is quick to side with the underdog against injustice and oppression of any kind. He is a fiery and eloquent public speaker, as well as a lecturer on socialism and other economic and political topics.

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In his works, Jack London leads his readers to pleasant settings full of action, fiction, love, supremacy, and intense love for surviving. The Call of the Wild is one of the many famous London's novels. The Call of the Wild gives us significant events, such us the hard trails Buck has to endure with the heavy sled in order to arrive the Yukon, the change of owners, lack of food, strange places, etc. The Call of the Wild presents passionately and prolifically the great questions of life, love, and death, the struggle to survive with dignity and integrity in the frozen Yukon. This novel shows the true love and the respect from Buck to John Thornton.

Finally, this present work sets Jack London's contribution and legacy. In spite of London is early death forty, he accomplishes more in a short lifetime than most men in several lifetimes. London gives his

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readers a wide variety of work, such as hundred of stories, novels, non-fiction, autobiographical memoirs, and plays. His famous novels are made into films such as “The Sea Wolf” and “The Call of the Wild.” In addition, London’s legacy is extraordinary. There is a valuable and pleasant park called, “Jack London State Historic Park.” This historic park offers visitors a great variety of knowledge and entertainment like the cottage where London lived, wrote, the “Wolf House ruins”, London’s grave, the Pig Palace, the House of Happy Walls Museum, a library with some London’s collection of manuscripts, the dam, and nine miles of hiking and riding trails. People can enjoy this Beauty Ranch and know more about London.

This work draws these most important topics for people who like literature and want to know more

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about this valuable writer, his adventures, huge work  
in the American literature.

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## CHAPTER 1

### JACK LONDON'S BIOGRAPHY

#### 1. CHILDHOOD

John Griffit London was born on January 12, 1876, in San Francisco, California. His parents gave their son the name of John Griffith London, but as an adolescent, he adopted the name of Jack London as a pen name. Jack London was the son of an unmarried mother of wealthy background, Flora Wellman. His mother was a music teacher and spiritualist who claimed to channel the spirit of an Indian chief. His biological father was



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William Chaney, a journalist, lawyer, and major figure in the development of American astrology. Chaney stated that he could not be Jack's father because he was impotent; he asserted that Jack's mother had had relations with other men and averred that Jack's mother had slandered him. William Chaney abandoned Jack's mother when she was pregnant.

In 1876, Flora Wellman gave her baby ex-slave Virginia Prentiss, who would remain a major maternal figure in Jack's life. Late in the same year of 1876, London's mother married John London, a partially disabled Civil War veteran who gave his last name, his protection, and his love to Jack London. The family went to live in the San Francisco Bay Area before settling in Oakland, where London completed grade school.

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During his childhood, London was self-educated. He taught himself in the public library, by reading books. His family was working class and was continually on the move to find

income because they didn't have enough money to spend. At the age of ten London was on the streets selling newspapers to supplement the family's meager income. London worked at various hard-labor jobs: such as a fisherman, a sailor, a laborer, a factory worker, an oyster pirate on the San Francisco Bay, a member of the California Fish Patrol, a railroad hobo, and a gold prospector in the Klondike, before getting back to school at 19.

In 1889, London began working 12 to 18 hours a day at Hickmott's Cannery. He became a "work

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beast" laboring in a cannery, a jute mill, a laundry, and shoveling coal in a power station. He worked for ten cents an hour, six and seven days a week. Seeking a way out of this grueling labor, after some time, he borrowed money from his black foster-mother, Virginia Prentiss in order to buy a sloop called Razzle-Dazzle from an oyster pirate named French Frank. Jack London became an oyster pirate himself. However, a few months later his sloop<sup>1</sup> became damaged beyond repair. He changed to the side of the law and became a member of the California Fish Patrol.

In 1893, Jack London signed on to the sailing schooner Sophie Sutherland, bound for the coast of



<sup>1</sup> Sloop is a single-masted, fore-and-aft-rigged sailing boat with a mainsail and a jib.

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Japan. After many experiences as a hobo and as a sailor, he returned to Oakland and attended Oakland High School, where he contributed a number of articles to the high school's magazine, *The Aegis*. At this time, Jack London published his first work, "Typhoon off the coast of Japan," an account of his sailing experiences.

When London returned to Oakland, he participated and organized labor strikes because the country was beset with economic and cultural changes in 1893, and Oakland was swept by labor unrest. It was a world in transition. The economy dominated by agriculture was being replaced by the world of the machine, and the factory. Companies paid their workers low salaries, and the workers had to endure long hours of work and bad conditions. At this time, there were many unemployed people they

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participated in strikes. They began to protest about their rights as employees. In 1894, Jack London participated in a strike against Pullman factory in California. After that, Jack London endured grueling work in a jute mill and a street-railway power plant. Later, he became a tramp.

In 1894, he spent 30 days in prison for vagrancy in the Erie County Penitentiary at Buffalo because of his participation in the strikes. He started to have a social conscience due the injustices in his country, such us low salaries, unemployment, beggars, and the bad situation of his life. He saw in socialism a chance for the salvation of those as lost as he had once been. He hungered for knowledge and success that would lift him above degrading poverty. He saw the birth of an indomitable spirit which would eventually lead him not only to a philosophy of

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individualism because he could not forget the sufferings of his past. In his book The Road, he wrote: "Man-handling was merely one of the very minor unprintable horrors of the Erie County Pen. I say 'unprintable'; and in justice I must also say undescribable. They were unthinkable to me until I saw them, and I was no spring chicken in the ways of the world and the awful abysses of human degradation. It would take a deep plummet to reach bottom in the Erie County Pen, and I do but skim lightly and facetiously the surface of things as I there saw them."

London desperately wanted to attend the University of California, Berkeley, and, in 1896 after a summer of intense studying, he did. However, his financial circumstances forced him to leave the university in 1897.

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After London left the University, London, like many other American and Canadian men, went north to Alaska and the Klondike region of Canada to search for gold. At this time, this was the Alaska Gold Rush. Although London never found any gold, his experience in the extreme environment of this cold part of the world was very important for him. This strong experience gave him ideas for the stories he would write when he decided to return to California. Upon his return to the San Francisco area in 1898, the vision of the world in London grew in the realm of literature, and so he went to Oakland, which in this particular instance was the public library, brought Jack London into contact with the romantic influence of such minds as those of Du Chaillu<sup>2</sup>, Ouida<sup>3</sup>, and

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<sup>2</sup> Du Chaillu was a French explorer. He wrote some books about his trips to Africa, and children's tales.

<sup>3</sup> Ouida was an English writer; her real name was Marie-Louise de la Ramée. She wrote children's books and collections of short stories and essays.

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Washington Irving<sup>4</sup>. In the tales and travels of these writers the ambitious lad read a promise of the future. From that time on he craved contact with the bigness of the world and ever followed beyond the horizon of his early life the enthralling trail of experience. Despite this set back, London was an active reader and he immediately proposed to become a writer.

In 1885, he read Ouida's long novel, Signa, which described an unschooled Italian peasant child who achieved fame as an opera composer. He credited this as the seed of his literary success, because London himself was an unschooled.

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<sup>4</sup> Washington Irving was an American author, short story writer, essayist, poet, travel book writer, biographer, and columnist. Irving has been called the father of the American short story.

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## 2. FIRST SUCCESS

After Jack London left the university, he resolved to succeed as an author. His diligent habits and innate skills catapulted him far beyond most of his literary peers in both perspective and content.

In July of 1897, Jack London sailed from Oakland to join the “Gold Rush” in Klondike<sup>5</sup> where he later set his successful stories. The time Jack London worked in Klondike was prejudicial to his health. He developed scurvy<sup>6</sup>. His gums became swollen, eventually leading to the loss of his four front teeth. A constant gnawing pain affected his hip and leg muscles, and his face was stricken with marks.

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<sup>5</sup> Klondike is a region of Yukon located in the northwest of Canada.

<sup>6</sup> Scurvy is a disease caused by deficiency of vitamin C, marked by bleeding gums, subcutaneous bleeding, and weakness.

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These struggles inspired him to what is called his best short story, To Build a Fire. This famous story was published in the year of 1908. However, he had published other works before. When he returned to Oakland in 1898, Jack London struggled seriously to break into print, a struggle memorably described in his novel, Martin Eden.

His first published story was an Alaskan tale entitled To the Man On Trail. The literary journal The Overland Monthly offered him only five dollars for it; Jack London thought it was a small amount, and he came close to abandoning his writing career. However, when the literary journal, The Black Cat accepted his story, A Thousand Deaths and paid him \$40, he was saved because as he himself said, it was the first payment he had ever received for a story. His writing career was launched.

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Jack London was fortunate in the timing of his writing career. He started just as new printing technologies enabled lower-cost production of magazines. This resulted in a boom in popular magazines aimed at a wide public audience and provided strong market for short fiction. In 1900, he made \$2,500 in writing, the equivalent of perhaps over \$200,000 today.

By 1902 he had published three volumes of short stories: The Son of the Wolf (1900), The Cod of his Fathers (1901), and Children of the Frost (1902), establishing his reputation. One of the works he sold to magazines was a short story known as either Batard or Diable. On January of 1903, Jack London presented the completed manuscript of The Call of

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the Wild to the Saturday Evening Post. In February the editor agreed to purchase the story if Jack would cut it to five thousand words, and he was asked to set his price. Jack agreed to shorten the story and set the price at three cents a word. In March he received a check for seven hundred and fifty dollars. Later, after Twenty-two days, the literary journal Macmillan bought the book's rights for two thousand dollars, with a promise to give it extensive advertising.

### 3. MARRIAGE

Jack London was married twice. The first time he got married was when he was 24 years old. His first wife was Bessie Maddern, his second wife was Charmian Kittredge.

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### 3.1 First marriage

Jack London married his math tutor and friend Bessie Maddern on April 7, 1900. Bess had been part of his circle of friends for some years. For Jack London, Victorian marriage typical of the time, based on "good breeding," not love. Both London and Bess respected each other a lot; in spite of that, they didn't love each other. London had a pet name for each wife. London's pet name for Bess was "Mother-Girl" and Bess's for London was "Daddy-Boy".

London and Bessie Maddern had two daughters,



Joan and Bess. Their first child, Joan, was born on January 15, 1901, and their second, Bessie, was born on October 20, 1902. Later, she

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was called Becky. Both children were born in Piedmont, California. London loved his children very much. His memoir Jack London and His Daughters, published posthumously, showed London's unmistakable happiness and pride in his children.

In 1903, Jack London's marriage was under continuous tension, and its breakup was imminent. Bessie was a fine woman, but they were extremely incompatible. There was no love between them. Even companionship and respect had gone out of the marriage. However, Jack was still kind and gentle to Bessie.

The writer Joseph Noel said, "Bessie was the eternal mother. She lived at first for Jack, corrected his manuscripts, drilled him in grammar, but when the children came she lived for them. Herein were her

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greatest honor and her first blunder." However, according to London, Bessie was devoted to purity. He said, "When I tell her morality is only evidence of low blood pressure, she hates me. She'd sell me and the children out for her damned purity. It's terrible. Every time I come back after being away from home for a night, she won't let me be in the same room with her if she can help it."

On July 24, 1903, London moved out. In 1904, four years after their marriage, London and Bess negotiated the terms of a divorce, and the decree was granted in November.

### **3.2 Second marriage**

In 1905, one year after his divorce, London married Charmian Kittredge. London was introduced to Kittredge by his Macmillan Publisher, George Platt

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Brett while Kittredge served as Brett's secretary.

London found true love with Charmian Kittredge.

During their marriage, they attempted to have children. However, one child died at birth, and another pregnancy ended in a miscarriage.

His pet name for Charmian was "mate-woman."

During his first marriage, London was restless and sought extramarital sexual affairs. But in Charmian he found not only a sexually active and adventurous partner, but his future life-companion whom he respected and who was his true love.



London and Kittredge traveled together on numerous trips around the world. In 1907, they sailed the Pacific to the South Seas in their sloop, called Snark to Hawaii and

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on to Australia. In addition, the couple also visited Goldfield, Nevada, in 1907. They toured the mines and participated in a parade, but they had to return due a variety of health problems. They were heartbroken about having to abandon the trip and about having to sell the Snark. London returned to Glen Ellen, the place where he lived, to plan building a ranch, and he encouraged his wife to start her own writing career. Consequently, Charmian Kittredge began writing and wrote three books concerning their life: The Log of the Snark, Our Hawaii, and The Book of Jack London.

## 4. DEATH

Jack London died on November 22, 1916, at the age of 40. He died on the porch on his ranch. Jack

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London's death is controversial. Many sources describe it as a suicide. However, this appears to be a rumor or speculation, because in so many of his fiction stories, London describes murder and suicide feature.

In his autobiographical novel, Martin Eden, the protagonist commits suicide by drowning. A closer parallel occurs in the dénouement of The Little Lady of the Big House, in which the heroine, confronted by the pain of a mortal and untreatable gunshot wound, suffered an assisted suicide by means of morphine.

London had been a robust man, but went through several serious illnesses, including scurvy. At the time of his death he had suffered from dysentery and uremia, and during the voyage of the Snark, he may have picked up unspecified tropical

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infections or parasites that were incurable and poorly understood at the time.

In the last days of his life, he suffered extreme pain and was taking morphine. It is possible that a morphine overdose, accidental or deliberate, may have contributed to his death. His death certificate states the cause of death was uremia<sup>7</sup>, following renal colic, also known as uremic poisoning.



Jack London's ashes were buried, together with those of his second wife Charmian, in Jack London State Historic Park, in Glen

Ellen, California. The simple grave is marked only by a mossy boulder.

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<sup>7</sup> Uremia is a toxic condition resulting from kidney disease in which there is retention in the bloodstream of waste products normally excreted in the urine.

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## CHAPTER II

### WORKS

Jack London wrote his stories under almost impossible circumstances, because he educated himself and was faced with continual economic hardship. Jack London studied other writers and began to submit stories, jokes, and poems to various publications, mostly without any success. In addition, he stumbled and fought for three long years in the literary wilderness. But at the end of his three-year travail success was his.

After that, Jack London suffered three years of endurance to achieve the top. London became the highest paid, most popular novelist, and short story writer of his day. He wrote passionately and prolifically about the great questions of life and death,

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the struggle to survive with dignity and integrity. He wove these elemental ideas into stories of high adventure based on his own firsthand experiences at sea, or in Alaska, or in the fields and factories of California. As a result, his writing appealed a general audience.

### 1. SHORT STORIES

Jack London, a prolific writer, returned to San Francisco in 1899 and began to write about his lived experiences in Alaska's Yukon. At that moment, the vision of the world in London grew in the realm of literature and provided the metaphorical gold to start organizing his ideas and set up in his short stories.

He turned to pursue his writing seriously. He began to write short stories which gained acceptance, and started to be published. His work exemplified

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traditional American values and captured the spirit of adventure and human interest. On the other hand, his stories transported readers to wonderful places such as the fragrant isles of the Pacific, the verdant valleys of California, the Arctic cold more treacherous than anything they had ever imagined, and the awesome danger of the high seas. In his stories, there was a lot of drama, suspense, humor, and even romance. Jack London wrote 197 short stories about different topics. Some of his short stories were the following:

1. *An Adventure in the Upper Sea*
2. *All Gold Cañon*
3. *Aloha Oe*
4. *Amateur Night*
5. *And 'Frisco Kid Came Back*

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6. *The Apostate*
7. *At the Rainbow's End*
8. *Bald-Face*
9. *The Banks of the Sacramento*
10. *The Law of Life*
11. *The Benefit of the Doubt*
12. *The Bones of Kahekili*
13. *Brown Wolf*
14. *Bunches of Knuckles*
15. *By the Turtles of Tasman*
16. *The Captain of the Susan Drew*
17. *Charley's Coup*
18. *Chased by the Trail*
19. *The Chinago*
20. *Chris Farrington, Able Seaman*

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21. *Chun Ah Chun*
22. *Created He Them*
23. *A Curious Fragment*
24. *A Daughter of the Aurora*
25. *A Day's Lodging*
26. *The Death of Ligoun*
27. *Demetrios Contos*
28. *The Devil's Dice Box*
29. *The Devils of Fuatino*
30. *A Dream Image*
31. *The Dream of Debs*
32. *Dutch Courage*
33. *The End of the Chapter*
34. *The End of the Story*
35. *The Enemy of All the World*

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36. *The Eternity of Forms*

37. *Even unto Death*

38. *The Faith of Men*

39. *The Feathers of the Sun*

40. *Finis*

41. *Flush of Gold*

42. *A Flutter in Eggs*

43. *The "Francis Spaight"*

44. *"Frisco Kid's" Story*

45. *The "Fuzziness" of Hoockla-Heen*

46. *A Goboto Night*

47. *The God of His Fathers*

48. *Goliah*

49. *Grit of Women*

50. *The Great Interrogation*

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Jack London's short stories called their readers' attention because London was always against injustice or oppression of any kind. In his writings, he was a fiery and eloquent who sought the freedom. A man whose fabulous success was due not to special favor of any kind, but to a combination of unusual mental ability and immense vitality to write on a wide range of important topics such as economics, oppression, politics, critique to capitalism, and poverty. In his writings, London was full of laughter, restlessness and courage, always eager for adventure on land or sea, and he was one of the most attractive and romantic figures of his time.

London is known for his books, and his short stories, such as To Build a Fire, The Law of Life, The White Silence, and The League of the Old Men.

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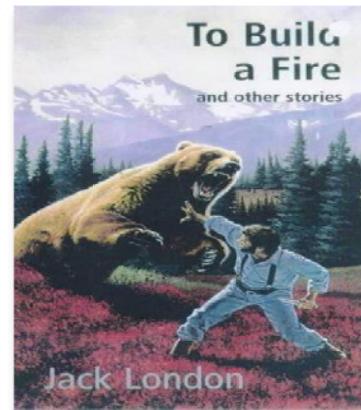
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## To Build a Fire

This story is the best known of all his stories, which carries its readers into the Arctic cold, more treacherous than anything they have ever imagined. This famous story is published in 1908.



The story is about a man who is traveling alone with a husky wolf-dog in the frozen Yukon, in Alaska. He knows that it is not safe to travel when it is too cold; however, even though an old-timer has warned him that no man should travel in the Klondike alone when the temperature is less than fifty degrees below zero, he stubbornly keeps moving. The man builds the fire under a pine tree covered in snow. The heat from the fire melts some of the snow in the tree and

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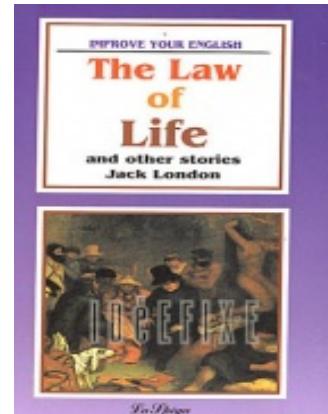


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sends a huge fall of snow from the tree right on the fire. The fire goes out. He tries to build another fire to dry his clothes, warm his body, and move on, but he does not success because his hands are so cold they have no feeling. Despite several attempts, the man decides to kill the dog and to put his hands inside its warm body to restore his circulation. But it is too late. He finally dies.

### **The Law of Life**

This short story is about two men who are traveling through the Yukon carrying sacks of gold. One man injures his ankle, but the other man does not pay attention to his injured companion, and he travels on his voyage alone. The man's injured ankle slows his



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pace and he is forced to rest many times. This slow pace and days of cloudy skies cause him to lose his way. For days, the man wanders aimlessly through the barren plains. After several days of traveling, he is discovered by a group of scientists lying on a beach. A nurse takes care of him and he returns at his downtown.

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## The White Silence

In the story, London makes clear that the “law of survival” permeated all levels of existence. Jack London emphasizes the survival of the individual.

The story is about Malemute who accompanies a man called Manson, and his wife through the Yukon in an attempt to get to civilization before spring. They travel with their dogs for some days. When the Malemute's dogs weaken in their traces and the stronger dogs devour the weak. And when the dogs are unable to subsist on their own ration, they turn to the men in order to survive. After Mason dies, Malemute tries to find food for himself and the woman, only to return to discover the dogs attacking.

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## **The League of the Old Men**

The story is about a tribe of Native Americans called “Whitefish.” The tribe is being exterminated by Europeans somewhere in the Yukon. The decimation of their people is not directly caused by the European intrusion. One man called Imber decides to stand up for his tribe and protect them. Imber has seen his tribe become victim to white man's disease, white man's habits, and the loss of thousands of animals to the fur trade. Imber organizes a group of people to kill any white man who comes around their tribe. Eventually, Imber is the only one left in his tribe. Then Imber decides to turn himself to his tribe because Imber realizes that he has failed.

## **2. NOVELS**

Jack London began his literary career as a novelist and a short stories author. His novels gave him the

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success he was looking for at that moment. At the beginning, writing novels was not an easy work, but at the end after the huge success of the novels The Call of the Wild and The Sea Wolf, Jack London became one of the most famous authors of the United States. Jack London became the first writer of the American novelist who reached success in America and Europe.

To earn his living as a writer, London was forced to publish his novels initially in magazines. In order to reach the highly lucrative magazine market, he had to accept the magazine editors' conventional privilege to tailor material for the specific needs of their journals: to omit profanity; to cut material considered overlong for the space provided; and to divide paragraphs too lengthy for the double-column format of most magazines.

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His novels are based in his own experiences as a sailor, beggar, and laborer. His most famous novels are based on his experiences as gold hunter. And some other novels are based in his ideology as a socialist.

Jack London wrote at least twenty-five novels.

1. *A Daughter of the Snows*
2. *Children of the Frost*
3. *The Call of the Wild*
4. *The Kempton-Wace Letters*
5. *The Sea-Wolf*
6. *The Game*
7. *White Fang*
8. *Before Adam*
9. *The Iron Heel*
10. *Martin Eden*

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11. *Burning Daylight*
12. *Adventure*
13. *Smoke Bellew*
14. *The Scarlet Plague*
15. *The Abysmal Brute*
16. *The Valley of the Moon*
17. *The Mutiny of the Elsinore*
18. *The Star Rover*
19. *The Little Lady of the Big House*
20. *The Turtles of Tasman*
21. *Jerry of the Islands*
22. *Michael, Brother of Jerry*
23. *Hearts of Three*
24. *The Assassination Bureau, Ltd*
25. *The wanderer of the Stars*

His most famous novels are The Call of the Wild,

The Sea-Wolf, White Fang, and Martin Eden.

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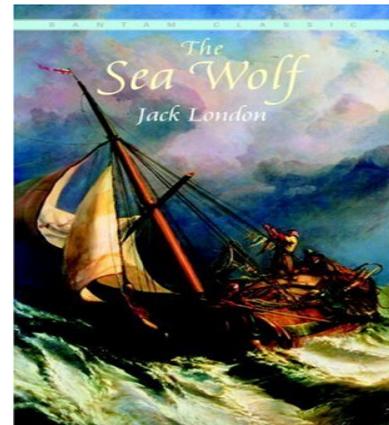
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## The Sea Wolf

The Sea-Wolf is an adventure novel about a literary critic, and other survivors of an ocean collision who come under the dominance of Wolf Larsen, the powerful and immoral sea captain who rescues them. The Sea Wolf was publicized in 1904. Its first printing of forty thousand copies is immediately sold out.



## Background

The personal character of the novel's antagonist "Wolf Larsen" was attributed to a real sailor London knew, Captain Alex MacLean. According to London, "much of the Sea Wolf is imaginary development, but the basis is Alexander McLean". This novel describes experiences that Jack London had, or

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heard told about when he sailed on the Sophia Sutherland.

London's intention to write The Sea-Wolf was according to him "an attack on Nietzsche's super-man philosophy<sup>8</sup>." The novel also contains references to Herbert Spencer<sup>9</sup>, Omar Khayyam<sup>10</sup>, Shakespeare, and John Milton.

## Characters

**Wolf Larsen:** Larsen is a complex character. Physically, he is described as approximately five feet ten with a massive build: broad shoulders and a deep chest. His strength is described as primitive. He is

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<sup>8</sup> Super-man philosophy was created by Frierich Nietzsche. According to this philosophy super-man accepts the death of God. This means that the human being liberates from the supernatural world to be competent to live without false hope (the immortality of the soul, the paradise). Super-man accepts the totality of his life, including death. Super- man has his own moral rules.

<sup>9</sup> Herbert, Spencer was an English Social Theorist. He is considered to be the father of the evolutionist theory.

<sup>10</sup> Omar Khayyam was Persian English Social Theorist, mathematician, astronomer and poet. He is considered to be the father of the evolutionist theory. His famous poem *Rubaiyyat* has a thousand stanzas which talks about the nature and the human being.

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extremely intelligent, in relation to mathematics, literature, science, philosophy, and technology.

Larsen displays characteristics of a sociopath. He murders and abuses people without hesitation, seeing no value in life. He is also called "Wolf" because of his nature and viciousness.

**Humphrey van Weyden:** Van Weyden has a unique relationship with Wolf Larsen. Though he is the captain's prisoner, Larsen shows him favoritism and occasionally acts as a father figure, giving advice on how to survive aboard the ship.

## **Plot Summary**

The story starts with Humphrey Van Weyden onboard a San Francisco ferry, called Martinez, which collides with another ship in the fog and sinks. He is

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set adrift in the sea, eventually being picked up by Wolf Larsen.

A key event in the story is an attempted mutiny against Wolf Larsen by several members of the crew. The first attempt is by sending Larsen overboard; however, he manages to climb back onto the ship. Searching for his assailant, he ventures into the sleeping quarters, located beneath the main deck, the only exit being a ladder. Several, at least seven men, take part in the mutiny and attack Larsen. Larsen however, demonstrating his cruel endurance, strength, and conviction, manages to fight his way through the crew, climb the ladder with several men hanging on him, and escape relatively unharmed. He later gets his vengeance by torturing his crew.

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Following this, Larsen picks up another set of castaways, including a female poet named Maud Brewster. Brewster and Van Weyden have known each other previously, but only as writers. Both Wolf Larsen and Van Weyden immediately feel attraction to her, due to her intelligence and female delicacy. Van Weyden sees her as his first true love. He strives to protect her from the crew, the horrors of the sea, and Wolf Larsen. During one of Wolf Larsen's intense headaches, which render him near immobile, Van Weyden steals a boat and flees with Brewster.

They land on an uninhabited island, populated with seals. They hunt, build shelter and a fire, and survive for several days. The ship eventually crashes on the island with Wolf Larsen as the only crew member. It is purely by chance that Van Weyden and Brewster meet Larsen again.

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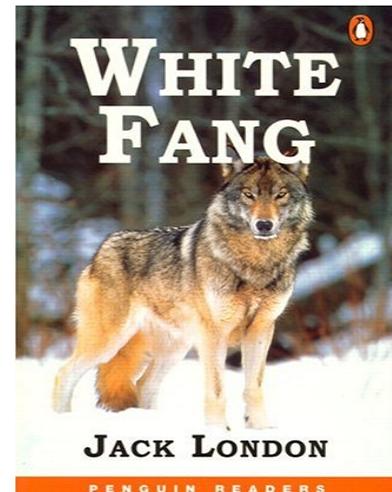


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Van Weyden and Brewster decide they can repair the ship, but Larsen, who intended to die on the island and take them with him, sabotages any repairs they make. Van Weyden finishes repairing the Ghost, and he and Brewster set sail. During a violent storm, Wolf Larsen dies. They give Larsen a burial at sea, an act mirroring an incident van Weyden witnessed when he was first rescued. The story ends with them being rescued by an American revenue cutter.

### **White Fang**

White Fang is an adventure novel about a wild wolf dog's journey toward becoming civilized in Yukon during the Klondike Gold Rush at the end of the 19th century.



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White Fang is a companion novel to London's best-known work, The Call of the Wild. The novel was first serialized in The Outing Magazine in May to October 1906.

White Fang has been adapted for the screen numerous times, including a live-action Disney film from 1991 which starred Ethan Hawke.

## Characters

**Bill:** One of the two men guiding the sled at the opening of the novel. Bill is shown to be very resourceful. He ties the dogs up every night as they are pursued by the pack of wolves, and manages to find new ways to keep the dogs from escaping.

**Henry:** One of the two men guiding the sled at the opening of the novel, Henry is a good companion to

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his friend Bill. Henry has an enormous amount of patience.

**One Eye:** White Fang's father.

**She-wolf/Kiche:** White Fang's mother, part wolf, and part dog.

**White Fang:** the only remaining son of One Eye and Kiche. He is shaped by the many aspects of his upbringing. He is a menace until his final master, Weedon Scott, teaches him love.

**Gray Beaver:** is the master to White Fang and always treats him fairly. There is a strong loyalty.

**Lip-lip:** A larger and older dog than White Fang. He is mean and cruel, and forces White Fang to become a loner.

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**Beauty Smith:** An evil man who is looked down upon by his fellow men. He treats White Fang cruelly.

**Weedon Scott:** He saves White Fang from death in a fight, and introduces him to a new life. Scott is a kind loving master.

**Matt:** Matt is Weedon Scott's business partner and traveling companion. He feeds White Fang and takes care of him sensibly.

**Collie:** A sheep dog owned by the Scott family. She makes life miserable for White Fang when he comes to live with the family.

## **Plot Summary**

The story begins before the three-quarters wolf-dog hybrid is born, with two men and their sled dog team. Bill and Henry are stalked by a large pack of starving wolves over the course of several days.

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Finally, four more teams find Henry after all his dogs have been eaten and Bill has been killed, in a ring of coals from his fire in an attempt to keep the wolves away. The story then follows the pack, which has been robbed of its last prey. When the pack finally manages to bring down a moose, the famine is ended; they eventually split up, and the story now follows a she-wolf and her mate, One Eye. The she-wolf gives birth to a litter of five cubs by the Mackenzie River, and all but one die from hunger.

The cub comes across five Native Americans one day, and the she-wolf comes to his rescue. One man, Grey Beaver, recognizes the she-wolf as Kiche, his brother's wolf dog, who leaves during a famine. Grey Beaver's brother is dead, so he takes Kiche and her cub, christening the cub White Fang. White Fang has a harsh life in the Indian camp. The current

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puppy pack, seeing him as a wolf, immediately attacks him. He is saved by the Indians, but the pups never accept him, and the leader Lip-lip marks him out for special persecution. White Fang grows up becoming more savage, morose, solitary, and a deadly fighter.

When White Fang is 5 years old, he is taken to Fort Yukon so that Grey Beaver can trade with the gold-hunters. There, he is sold to a dog-fighter, Beauty Smith. White Fang defeats all opponents, until a bulldog is brought in to fight him. The bulldog manages to get a grip on the skin and fur of White Fang's neck, and slowly and surely begins to strangle him. White Fang has nearly suffocated when a rich young gold hunter, Weedon Scott, rescues him. Finally, Scott returns to California with White Fang.

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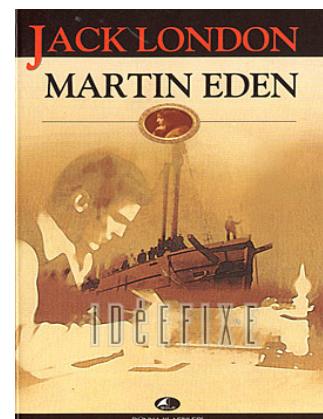
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## Martin Eden

Martin Eden is a novel about a struggling young writer. It was first serialized in the Pacific Monthly magazine from September 1908 to September 1909, and then published in book form by The Macmillan Company in September 1909.

### Characters

**Martin Eden:** A former sailor from a working class background who falls in love with a young bourgeois woman and decides to educate himself to become a writer. He can win her hand in marriage.



**Ruth Morse:** The young bourgeois woman attending university who captivates Eden while tutoring him in English.

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**Lizzie Connolly:** The cannery worker who is rejected by Eden, who is already in love with Ruth.

**Joe Dawson:** Eden's boss at the laundry, who wins Eden over with his cheeriness and capacity for work, but he is not an ambitious man for self-improvement.

**Russ Brissenden:** Eden's sickly writer counterpart, who encourages Eden to give up writing and return to the sea before city life swallows him up. He introduces Eden to a group of amateur philosophers.

### **Plot Summary**

Living in Oakland, Martin Eden struggles to rise far above his destitute circumstances through an intense and passionate pursuit of self-education in order to achieve a coveted place among the literary elite. The main driving force behind Martin Eden's efforts is his love for Ruth Morse. Because Eden is a

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sailor from a working class background, and the Morses are a bourgeois family, a union between them would be impossible unless he reached their level of wealth, cultural, and intellectual refinement.

He has incessantly promised Ruth will come just before the literary establishment discovers Eden's talents as a writer and lavishes him with the fame and fortune that, she loses her patience and rejects him in a melancholy letter. Instead of enjoying his success, Eden retreats into a quiet indifference, only interrupted to mentally rail against the genteelness of bourgeois society or to donate his new wealth to working class friends and family. The novel ends with Martin Eden committing suicide by drowning.

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### **3. NON-FICTION AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS**

#### **1. Non-fiction**

Jack London also has written nonfiction works such us essays, journals, documentaries, histories, photographs, and some journalism. London's nonfiction demonstrates the breadth and depth of his thinking and his versatility as a writer. Jack London's nonfiction also provides a historical context for much of the fiction. Not only does the nonfiction portray socialism during its most influential period, but it also delineates the American psyche during one of the most volatile transitions in American history.

London's nonfiction represents a significant segment of his work. It consists of over 500 articles, essays, lectures, public letters, and other

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categorizations that address a variety of important social and political issues of his day and ours: labor laws, unionism, equal rights for women, divorce, child rearing, prison reform, war, racism, conservation, animal rights, poverty, homelessness, and addiction. The nonfiction not only traces the development of London's politics, but also some of his basic values and philosophy.

All these works illustrate the author's skill at conveying to the reader a sense of the reality of adventure.

- *The People of the Abyss* (1903)
- *Revolution, and other Essays* (1910)
- *The Cruise of the Snark* (1911)
- *War of the Classes*

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## **The People of the Abyss**

This story is published in 1903. London writes this first-hand account by living in the East End for several months. The People of the Abyss is his critique of capitalism and poverty which people suffer at that time.

This work is about life in the East End of London in 1902. Jack London lives in the slums of London, England. When London goes to England, he has to face poverty. There is no food, shelter, and no outside help for days to find out what the purpose in life is. In addition, he finds the underworld of that great city beyond his belief, a sordid, broken, and hopeless city. Sometimes, he stays in workhouses or sleeps on the streets. The condition London has experienced in this place has been horrible.

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## John Barleycorn

The title is taken from the British folksong "John Barleycorn". The author tells about the social facilitation of alcohol, its addictive powers, and its deleterious effects on health. This work is published in 1913

There is a man named John Barleycorn who likes to drink alcohol so much. He walks generously with wide-spread and tentative legs. He falls frequently in the gutter and sees blue mice and pink elephants in the extremity of his ecstasy. John Barleycorn sends clear visions of the eventual pointlessness of life, love, and struggle.

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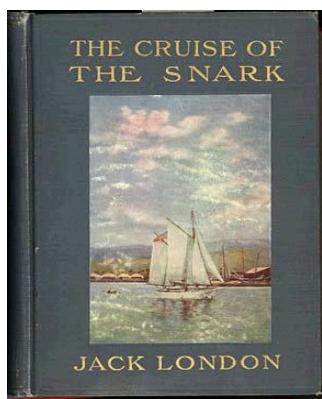
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## The Cruise of the Snark

The Cruise of the Snark is a memoir of Jack and Charmian London's 1907-1909 voyages across the Pacific.



The story tells about Jack London's sailing adventure in 1907 across the south Pacific in his sailboat called, "The Snark". In 1906, London begins to build a 45-foot yacht on which he planned to make his voyage around the world for seven years. After many delays, Jack, Charmian, and a small crew sail out of San Francisco Bay on April 23, 1907, bound for the South Pacific. London teaches himself celestial navigation<sup>11</sup> and the basics of sailing and of boats during the

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<sup>11</sup> Celestial navigation, also known as astronavigation is a position fixing technique that was devised to help sailors cross the featureless oceans without having to rely on dead reckoning to enable them to strike land. often measured.

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course of this adventure. Jack and his wife visit exotic locations including the Solomon Islands, Australia, and Hawaii. While London is in Hawaii, London learns some of the considered “Royal Sport” such as surfing, and riding on a horse. He visits the Leper colony on Molokai, and travels by horse back on Maui, around Haleakala and to Hana. His accounts and photographs provide insight into these remote places at the beginning of the 20th century. London ends his voyage in Sydney spending five weeks in a hospital recovering from his illness<sup>12</sup>.

“The Cruise” is a great non-fiction book, among few others by London that state his adventures and opinions. It truly captures his perspective of himself and the whole concept of adventure. For Jack, the

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<sup>12</sup> In Sydney, Jack was looking for treatment for his skin. He had fear to be Leprosy, but diagnosed as Psoriasis. When the doctors in Sydney advised Jack to forsake the cruise, Jack and his wife returned to California.

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trip certainly is not a failure. This story is very important and invaluable for literature career.

## **War of the Classes**

Jack London is a vocal social critic and an avowed champion of socialism who often, and severely criticizes social injustices that existed in the American society throughout his life. The War of the Classes is a collection of essays that explains London's conversion how he explores and defines the classic struggle between labor and management.

This political essay is about an average bourgeois mind. He says socialism is merely a menace, vague and formless. When Jack discusses socialism, he condemns an ignoramus out of his own mouth. He does not know the literature of socialism,

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its philosophy, or its politics. His lips mumble mouldy phrases, such as "Men are not born equal and never can be;" "It is Utopian and impossible." There are other phrases such as "Man will first have to be born again;" "Cooperative colonies have always failed;" "In ten years there would be rich and poor men such as there are today." "It surely is time that the capitalists know something about this socialism that they feel menaces them." All these phrases Jack London has written in his essay. He disagrees with the pains and disorders of American society in one of its most disturbing crises.

Jack London has an interesting collection of interviews which constituted a special segment of his nonfiction. The interviews include: "How to Get Thirty Cents a Word for What You Write", "Novelist Tells Journal's Readers How to Write a Novel", "American

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Fiction Lacking in Courage"; and "Jack London's *Call of the Wild* Draws Him to Poetry and Song". These interviews are very significant in providing insight to London's philosophy of writing.

These interviews and other pieces of the nonfiction provide philosophical framework for Jack London's fiction, carrying his readers toward spectacular places.

## 2. Autobiographical Memoirs

Jack London writes autobiographical memoirs for nature. He begins this works indicating what he plans to write. That keen appreciation of the value of intensity which London manifests in all his writings contributes to his autobiographical memoirs precisely the right dramatic feeling, giving them an incredibly

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accurate balance. All these pieces convey to the reader a sense of the reality of adventure and drama.

There are some autobiographical memoirs written by Jack:

- The Road (1907)

Jack London's journalism:

- Articles published in Overland Monthly
- Jack London's War
- The Russo-Japanese War
- The Good Soldier Canard
- Mexico's Army and Ours
- San Francisco Earthquake and Fire

## The Road

It is a series of tales and reminiscences of Jack London's hobo days. It relates the tricks that hobos

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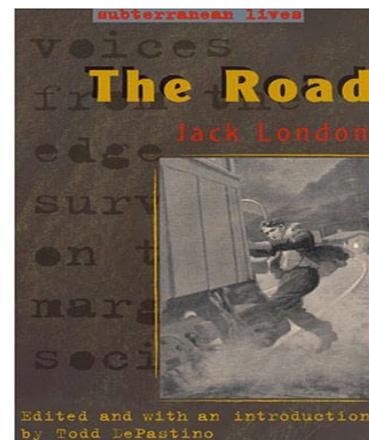
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use to evade train crews, and reminisces about his travels.

It is also a chapter in a life filled with the need to keep moving from one new adventure to another. In 1891, at the age of fifteen, Jack



London joins the oyster pirates; a group of hoodlums who frequents the Oakland wharves by day and by night, raid the private oyster beds in the southern portion of San Francisco Bay. In the company of reckless and daring men who live outside the law, London quickly proves his bravery. His courage, strength, and agility soon make him a master of small boat sailing, and he earns him the title of "Prince of the Oyster Pirates." This brings him to the attention

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of law enforcement officers who finally persuade him to abandon the pirates and joins the "Fish Patrol".

#### **4. DRAMA WORKS**

Among his extensive literary works, Jack London includes drama works. Some drama works have not been produced, and some others have not been published. However, some of the drama works are produced in different theaters in the United States.

**1."The Return of Ulysses – A Modern Version,"**  
one-Act Play written in heroic couplets. Unpublished and presumably never produced.

**2."The Great Interrogation,"** one-Act Play written.  
Produced in different theaters like:

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- The Alcazar Theater, San Francisco, in August, 1905.
- Burbank Theater, Los Angeles, in October, 1905.
- Majestic Theater, Chicago, in May, 1907.
- Salt Lake City, Utah, in July, 1911.

Also, it was produced by the Cortelyou Club at the Brighton Beach Music Hall, in June, 1911.

**3. "As It Was in the Beginning,"** a Four-Act Comedy, 1905. Unpublished and presumably never produced.

**4. "Scorn of Women"** (1906), a Three-Act Play.

**5. The Birth Mark** (1917), a One-Act Play. Produced in New York City, in September, 1911.

**6. "Gold,"** a Three-Act Play, written in collaboration with Herbert Heron, 1910. Unpublished and presumably never produced.

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**7. “A Wicked Woman” (1917), one-Act Play.**

Produced on the Orpheum Theatre Circuit in Portland, Spokane, and Seattle in July, 1910.

**8. "Billy the Kid,"** produced in Kansas City and Detroit in July, 1910. Advertisement states that it had a two-year run.

**9. “Theft” (1910), a Four-Act Play.** Produced by the Luthuanian National Drama Theatre, in November, 1955.

**10. “The First Poet” (1911), a One-Act Play.** It was published in Century Magazine in June, 1911, and in The Turtles of Tasman (1916). Produced at the Forest Theatre, Carmel, California in July, 1915.

**11. "War,"** a Drama of Peace in Three Acts, written in collaboration with Joseph Noel, 1912. Unpublished and presumably never produced.

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**12. "Babylonia,"** a Musical Comedy. Unpublished and presumably never produced.

**13. "Gold,"** a Three-Act Play, 1913. Unpublished and presumably never produced.

**14. "The Damascus Road,"** a Three-Act Play, 1913. Unpublished and presumably never produced.

**15. "Daughters of the Rich,"** one-Act Play, 1915. Unpublished.

**16. “The Acorn Planter,”** a Three-Act Play, 1916. Never produced.

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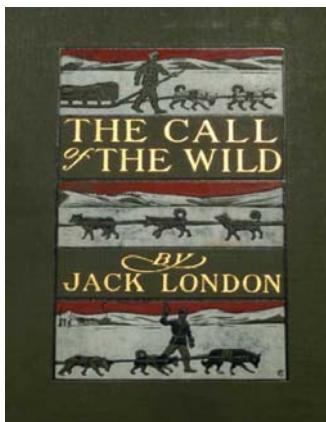
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## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS OF ONE OF LONDON'S WORKS

#### 1. "THE CALL OF THE WILD"

The Call of the Wild is an adventure story. It was published by The Macmillan Company in June of 1903. The first edition of 10,000 copies



sold out in the first day. It has become one of the great books in literature, published in hundreds of editions in more than fifty languages. According some literature critics, The Call of the Wild is London's most read novel, and it is generally considered his best.

The story is interesting because it contains real elements. London writes about things he

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experimented when he was in the Yukon Territory during the gold rush. He experienced the cold, saw the dog fights, and met the many different kinds of people who were there.

The novel is about Buck, a large dog who lives a comfortable life on a California ranch. Later, he is stolen, sold, and carried to the Yukon. Buck learns to survive in the cold, under mistreatments, and starvation. In his new life as a sled dog, he begins to listen to a call which is about his primitive instincts passed down from his ancestors, and finally, he responds to the call of the wild, and becomes the leader of the wolf pack.

The Call of the Wild is not only considered a dog tale, but it is much more. London writes about people's behavior represented in animals, in this case

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dogs. London writes about how people's temper changes in different circumstances.

London describes Atavism<sup>13</sup>. When Buck lives in the wilderness, he responds to his instincts of a wild carnivore. When he kills to eat, he is responding to the call of the wild. His atavism changes him into a wolf-like creature that prefers to live in a savage environment in which he must fight and kill to live.

Thus, the story begins with the first stanza of John O'Hara's poem "Atavism."

*"Old longings nomadic leap,  
Chafing at custom's chain;  
Again from its brumal sleep  
Wakens the ferine strain."*

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<sup>13</sup> Atavism is the reappearance of a characteristic in an organism after several generations of absence.

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London also describes survival through adaptation. Buck learns to live according the circumstances. His strength and courage help him to support his sufferings. After the man in the red sweater beats him with a club, he learns to control his rage. When he fights his cunning rival Spitz, he changes his tactics after first failing to penetrate his foe's defenses. When he is in the wild, he is wild. When someone shows him love, he shows love. When someone shows him respect, he is kind.

Cruelty and Compassion are other concerns in this novel. For example, when the man in the red sweater beats him with his club, Buck experiences human cruelty. On the other hand, Buck experiences compassion when John Thornton rescues Buck from the cruel hands of the three Americans. Each experience sharpens his ability to evaluate humans.

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Love and friendship are important topics to London. The author shows it when François and Perrault say good-bye to Buck; they cry and hug Buck showing their friendship and love for Buck. Also, Buck and John Thornton become loyal and loving friends after Thornton rescues Buck. Even though Buck changes his temper, he remains docile and loving in the presence of Thornton. After Indians kill Thornton, Buck never forgets him, even when he becomes leader of a wolf pack.

The story appeals to many different types of readers. Anyone who has known the loyalty of a dog can understand how some of Buck's masters feel. Anyone who likes adventure and risk will travel across the frozen expanses of the Yukon.

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Several films have been based on the novel.

The best-known of these, emphasizing human over canine characters, is the version starring Clark Gable and Loretta Young in 1935.

## 1.1 CHARACTERS

London has used several kinds of characters to develop his famous novel. Some of them have more importance than others. Each one has his/her own personality and temperament. It makes the work more realistic and produces mixed emotions. The following characters are the most important ones in the story.

**Buck:** Buck is the main character of the novel. When Buck lives with Judge Miller, he is a domestic and pampered dog. He likes hunting and other sports, so

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he has strong muscles. From his St. Bernard father, he inherits size and weight, but it is his shepherd mother who gives shape to that size and weight. After his experience as a draught dog, he becomes an amazing animal. His intelligence is formidable. Every part of his body and his brain work with exquisite synergy; among all the parts there is a perfect equilibrium or adjustment. To sights and sounds, he responds speedily. At the end of the novel Buck becomes a wild animal who lives in the mountains with a wolf pack.

**Judge Miller:** Buck's owner. He lives in a huge ranch in California's Santa Clara Valley. Judge Miller is also a member of the Raisin Growers' Association. Buck's St. Bernard father is Judge Miller's devoted companion, and Buck wants to be devoted

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companion too. After Buck is bought, Judge Miller never sees Buck again.

**Elmo:** Elmo is Buck's father. Elmo is a St. Bernard. Buck's father is the Judge's faithful companion.

**Shep:** Shep is Buck's mother. Shep is a Scotch Shepherd.

**Manuel:** Manuel is Judge Miller's gardener. He likes to play the Chinese lottery. His salary is not enough to support his family. So Manuel steals and sells Buck to get some extra money.

**Man in the Red Sweater:** A man in Seattle who beats Buck with a club. When Buck travels on a train toward Seattle, he is the first man who beats Buck cruelty with his club. This man teaches Buck humility by hitting him with a club. Each time Buck is beaten by the man in the red sweater, Buck learns he has to

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obey his instructions. Later, he sells Buck to a pair French Canadian named Francois and Perrault.

**Perrault:** He is a French-Canadian sled driver and mail carrier for the Canadian government. Perrault looks for strong dogs because the Canadian Government needs to deliver the mail throughout Alaska and the Yukon Territory. Perrault buys Buck in Seattle.

**François:** He is a French-Canadian who is Perrault's coworker. Francois is a black-faced giant, a French Canadian half-breed. For Buck, Perrault and Francois are a new kind of man whom he is destined to see for some time. Buck grows to respect Perrault and Francois quickly because Perrault and Francois are fair, calm, and impartial men in administering

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justice. Francois punishes the sled dogs when those who are bad and rewards those who do well.

**Spitz:** He is a sly lead dog in Perrault's team and Buck's rival. Spitz is a violent dog. He is mean to the weaker dogs in the pack. Spitz doesn't follow any rules. He only wants to care his supremacy in the pack. When Buck becomes apart of the team of dogs, Spitz feels Buck as a dangerous rival since Buck had endured frozen Antarctic successfully. Eventually, Buck and Spitz have strong fights between themselves. Finally, in an argument, Buck changes tactics and kills Spitz.

**Dave:** He is a dog in Perrault's team. He does not care about the other sled dogs. Dave is a gloomy, morose, and solitary dog. Dave is a strong sled dog which refuses to leave the harness when he becomes

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ill on one of the team's journeys. Dave prefers to die pulling the sled.

**Pike, Billee, Joe, Dolly, Sol-leks, Dub:** They are other dogs in Perrault's team. They are Buck's fellow dogs.

**Scotch Half-Breed:** He buys Buck and the other dogs from François and Perrault in Skagway, Alaska. He is a sled driver and mail carrier for the Canadian government.

**Hal, Charles:** They are American adventurers who buy Buck and several other dogs. They mistreat Buck and other dogs during a trip.

**Charles** is a middle-aged man. He is an American adventurer who buys Buck and several dogs with Hal, but he doesn't know anything about the frozen Antarctic and the team dogs. During the trip, Charles

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neither assists the sled dogs nor Hal when John Thornton beats his brother in-law, Hal, because he feels so tired. Finally, he dies because the ice breaks around him.

**Hal** is a youngster of nineteen or twenty. He is Charles's brother in-law. His wife is Mercedes. Hal is cruel and often mistreats the sled dogs. He thinks the team dogs are unhelpful for the trip. Finally, Hal drowns with Mercedes, Charles, and the sled dogs because he doesn't listen to any kind of advice, except Buck who is saved by John Thornton.

**Mercedes:** She is Charles's wife and Hal's sister. Mercedes is a beautiful woman. Mercedes likes the luxuries of life. During the trip, she carries many superfluous things, and because of circumstances, she is forced to eliminate her unnecessary things. At

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the beginning, Mercedes shows compassion toward Buck and the other sled dogs; but later, she worries only about herself and insists on riding in the sled because she is tired of walking.

**John Thornton:** He is the man who rescues Buck from Hal and Charles after Hal beats Buck. Thornton cares for Buck and becomes his best friend. Buck loves him more than he has loved any other human.

To Buck, Thornton is the ideal master. John Thornton is a sensible man. He sees to the welfare of Buck as if he is his own son. When Thornton is killed by Yeehat Indians, Buck avenges Thornton's death, killing some Yeehtas.

**Hans, Pete:** They are John Thornton's gold-prospecting partners.

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**Buck's "Wild Brother":** He is a wolf that Buck befriends while roaming the forest near John Thornton's camp.

**Yeehat Indians:** They kill John Thornton, Hans, and Pete. Buck kills several Yeehats as revenge.

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## 1.2 Plot Summary

### THE CALL OF THE WILD

#### Part I

##### Into the primitive



Buck was born in Judge Miller's ranch in Santa Clara Valley, California. Buck's father was Elmo, a huge St Bernard and his mother was Shep, a Scotch

shepherd dog. Four years after his birth, Buck had lived the life of a sated aristocrat; he had a fine pride of himself. Buck loved this calm existence, carrying

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the Judge's grandchildren on his back and serving as the Judge's faithful companion, as his father had been before him. In his four years of life, Buck had become a huge strong dog with warm long hair.

In the autumn of 1897, the Klondike strike dragged men from the entire world to the frozen North. Some men had found gold in the frozen lands of Yukon and Alaska. The steamship and transportation companies were booming because of the find. Thousands of men traveled to the Northland in order to find the gold. For this find, people who traveled to Klondike wanted heavy dogs, with strong muscles for hard work.

Meanwhile, Manuel, one of Judge Miller's helpers of Judge Miller, who loved to play Chinese lottery, was in need of money, because his wages as

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a gardener's helper were low. Manuel took Buck and sold him to a sled dogs trainer in Collage Park. Never in all his life had Buck been so vilely treated. Buck was slowly introduced to the brutality of his new life. Buck was merely wounded by the man in the red sweater with his club because his torturer wanted Buck to be a good dog who obeyed all the man's instructions without complaint. Buck felt he was more of a prisoner than ever before. Buck had thoughts about escaping and returning home. However, Buck couldn't return whenever Buck tried to escape, he received stronger punishments. After two days of journey, the man in the red sweater arrived at Seattle with Buck and other dogs to be sold.

Buck was sold to a Canadian pair named Perrault and Francois. The two men needed strong sled dogs because the Canadian Government

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needed to deliver its dispatches. Perrault also bought another dog called Curly, a good natured Newfoundland. For Buck, Perrault, and Francois were a new kind of men whom he was destined to see for some time, Buck's new owners don't torture him because Buck speedily learned to respect them. Buck knew Perrault and Francois were fair men, calm, and impartial men in administering justice. Buck and Curly joined the team of sled dogs. One of the team dogs was Big, a snow – white member from Spitzbergen. The other dog was Dave, a gloomy, morose, and solitary dog.

The weather was steadily growing colder. Buck and all the dogs knew that a change was at hand. Buck and his companions had arrived at the frozen Antarctic, and this terrible cold brought Buck to hard work.

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## Part II

### The law of club and fang

The first day in Dyea, Alaska was a nightmare to Buck, who was still shocked at how much his life had changed in such a short period of time. All was confusion and action, and every moment life and limb were in danger. There was an imperative need to be constantly on alert. These dogs and men were not town dogs and men. They were savages, all of them, who knew no law, but the law of club and fang.

Buck received another shock. Francois fastened him an arrangement of straps and buckles. It was a harness such as people put on horses to work. His dignity was hurt because he was made a draft animal; however, he was too wise



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to rebel. He did his best at work, though it was all new and strange. Buck learned easily how to be a sled dog, and he made remarkable progress.

In order to deliver the mail quickly, Francois got another husky dog named Sol-leks. He seemed to be very experienced with scars and only one eye. His name means "the Angry One." Buck used to observe the old and new dogs carefully in order to learn things because he was determined to survive. He was confused at how he could sleep comfortably in the icy weather when they were traveling. Realizing that the sled dogs dug a hole under the snow to stay warm and sleep there, Buck happily followed this example and had a good night's sleep; his body heat was contained within the little snow cave, and he did not freeze during the night.

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Three more dogs were included in the team, making a total of nine. Buck discovered that although it was a hard job, it was not unlikable. The other dogs transmitted to him their eagerness to work. Dave was the wheeler dog, pulling in front of him was Buck, then came Sol-leks; the rest of the team was strung out ahead, single file, to the leader, whose position was filled by Spitz.

Day after day Francois, Perrault, and the group of dogs traveled hundred of miles. They always broke camp in the darkness of dawn, and they always pitched camp after dark eating their bit of fish. Buck never had enough. He was always starving, so he learned to take what did not belong to him. He watched and learned. He learned from Pike how to steal Francois and Perrault's meals.

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His first theft had shown that Buck had the capacity to survive in the hostile Northland environment. It also marked the decay of his moral nature. His development or retrogression was rapid. His muscles became hard as iron, and he grew callous to all ordinary pain. He learned to eat anything. His sight and scent became remarkably sharp. And he learned not only by experience, but instincts long dead became alive again. The domesticated generations fell from him. He seemed to remember the time the wild dogs strolled through the forest and killed their meat. “The old tricks which they had stamped into the heredity of the breed were his tricks. They came to him without effort as though they had been his always”.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Barnes & Noble Classics, The Call of the Wild and White Fang, Jack London, New York, NY 10011, US A, (2003): 23.

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## Part III

### The dominant primordial beast

Buck learnt to defend himself under the fierce conditions of trail life. Buck learnt to acquire new attitudes in order to survive in the cruel Antarctic. He learnt to control and to adjust himself to his new life and to feel at ease. Buck avoided fights as much as possible with other dogs. However, the strong fights and the bitter hatred between Spitz and Buck disturbed his stability in the camp. Spitz thought that Buck was a dangerous rival. Both Spitz and Buck wanted to show their supremacy; neither one of them wanted to be defeated in the battle field. However, Buck knew that he didn't have to fight because Francois or Perrault was always ready to use his club upon either dog when they were fighting.

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Once, the camp was invaded with skulking fury by starving huskies, four or five dogs. Another time, the sled dogs had been attacked by fierce invaders and a battle started. Buck was astonished because he had never seen such dogs that wanted to devour everything without realizing the consequences. For Buck, the warm taste of his enemies' blood in his mouth goaded him to greater fierceness. At the end of the battle, all animals were wounded in their bodies. Billie, Dave, Joe, Sol-leks Dub, and Dolly were seriously wounded. Perrault and Francois were worried over whether or not the wounded dogs had rabies dogs, and because there was still four hundred miles of trail between them and Dawson. This fact was terrible because the sled dogs had to drive over the hardest part of the trial. The trail was very dangerous because the Thirty Mile River was drafty.

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The ice bridges broke and the thermometer registered fifty below zero.

Perrault and Francois were brave and smart men who took all manner of risks resolutely. Finally, the two men and the sled dogs arrived at Fire Fingers after overcoming dangerous ways. In the morning, Dolly had rabies, so Francois killed her with his axe.

Meanwhile, Spitz realized Buck was tired, weak, and afraid. Spitz took advantage of that, and he tried to spring on Buck. It promoted a war between Buck and Spitz. Spitz felt his supremacy threatened by this strange dog. Spitz was jealous because he had known many dogs that were all too soft, dying under the toll, the frost, and starvation. None of them had been strong enough in camp or on the trail. However, Buck was the exception. Buck had endured the frost,

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starvation, and bad treatment. Besides, Buck was a masterful dog who helped the other dogs when Spitz tried to hurt them. This way Spitz lost his power as a leader because the dogs felt protected by Buck.

After some fights between Buck and Spitz, the two men and the team dogs arrived at Dawson. One night, at the mouth of the Tahkeena, Buck saw a rabbit in the forest. This made him thirst for blood, for the joy to kill. Buck wanted to kill the rabbit with his own teeth. However, Buck couldn't do it because Spitz killed the rabbit first. It encouraged the last fight between Buck and Spitz. One of them had to win. While Buck fought with Spitz, a familiar scene came to Buck. Buck remembered a battle in the forest. This scene was nothing new or strange. The fight was growing in cruelty because Spitz's attacks were astonishing. However, Buck's attacks helped him to

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destroy his enemy with courage, bravery, and cunning.

### Part IV

#### Who was won to mastership

In the morning, with Spitz missing, Buck thought he could occupy Spitz's position, but Perrault and François did not. François attempted to harness Sol-leks into position as leader of the pack. But Buck claimed the position, driving Sol-leks back. Each time that François put Sol-leks as leader of the pack, Buck drove Sol-leks back.

The men tried to put Buck into his old position for about one hour; however, Buck did not permit it. They threw clubs at him, but he dodged them. They cursed him, and he answered with snarl and kept out of their reach. He did not try to run away, but

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retreated around and around the camp, showing plainly that when his desire was met, he would come in and be leader. Perrault looked at his watch. They were late. He asked Francois to throw down the club. When Francois complied, Buck trotted in, laughing triumphantly and occupied the position at the head of the team.

Before finishing the day, the two men realized Buck was better than Spitz. Buck took up the duties of leadership and reestablished the discipline in the pack. The general tone of the team picked up immediately. With Buck at the head of the pack, the courier went quickly. It was a record run; each day for fourteen days, they averaged forty miles. The team was the constant center of worship by gold hunters and sled drivers. After that, Francois and Perrault received official orders to leave the team. It

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was the end. Francois hugged Buck and cried. They said good bye.

Another man, a Scotch half-breed took charge of Buck and the team, and in company with a dozen other dog-teams, he started back over the weary trail to Dawson. This time, they pulled a heavy load. They had to carry the mail with news from around the world to the men who sought gold under the shadow of the Pole. Buck did not like it. It became a monotonous life. Sometimes, when Buck took a rest, he thought about his past life in Judge Miller's big house, but often he remembered the man in the red sweater, and the great fight with Spitz. However, more potent were the memories of his heredity which he had never experienced before; the instincts, which had been asleep, but were now alive again.

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After some days, the pack arrived to Dawson; the trip had been hard. They were under weight and in poor condition. The team should have had a week or ten days at least to rest. The next trip was very hard; it was a difficult trail. The dogs were tired. But, Dave suffered most of all. Something was wrong inside him, but there were no broken bones. Because Dave was so weak, he could not work anymore. The Scotch half-breed took him out of the team. Dave did not want to rest because it meant losing his pride; he could not bear for another dog to do his work. Although he could not work, he continued. After some kilometers, he held out till camp was reached. The next morning, he tried to crawl to his driver, but he could not. His strength had left him. The last his team saw of him, he lay gasping in the snow,

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mournfully howling. Finally, the man returned to shoot  
Dave.



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## Part V

### The Toil of Trace and Trail

Thirty days had passed when Buck and his team arrived at Skaguay. This was much harder work for Buck because every one of the dogs was in a wretched state and exhausted. They had traveled twenty-five hundred miles in less than five months, and they had but five days to rest. Although the drivers encouraged the team, it was impossible to have a long rest because many were men who had arrived at Klondike in order to find the gold; therefore, the mail was taking huge proportions, and people needed more dogs for hard work.

Meanwhile, fresh batches of dogs had arrived for the trail, and those new dogs could take the place of tired and old dogs. Four days had passed when

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three inexperienced American pioneers named Charles, Hal, and a woman, Mercedes, bought Buck's sled team. From the moment Buck arrived at Hal's camp, Buck felt that it wasn't a good idea to trust and depend on them. These people were lazy, without order and discipline. Besides, the days passed and the new owners couldn't learn anything and did not know how to do anything; for example they couldn't pitch and break the camp.

One day, the three inexperienced American pioneers and the team dogs were ready to travel; however, they had arranged the load without a good method. The load was so heavy that Buck's sled team couldn't move it because the sled dogs were so weak, and they needed a rest. The three men told Charles and Hall that they had to reduce the load if they ever expected to reach Dawson, but Hal didn't

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listen to their advice. They continued their journey. However, the team dogs were unable to move the sled because Hal couldn't control the heavy sled. The load had to be reduced by eliminating unhelpful and superfluous things, even some articles which were necessary. Later, Hal decided to buy six new dogs in order to help with the heavy sled. Hal was so proud about his acquisition because nobody had fourteen dogs in a sled. Although Buck quickly taught new dogs their places and what not to do, Buck couldn't teach them what to do because he was so tired. Additionally, Hal had made incorrect decisions again because he didn't have enough food for so many dogs and so many days of journey, but it was not food that Buck and the huskies needed, it was rest. The sled dogs started to die: Dub, the three short haired pointers, and finally, the two mongrels.

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Finally, Charles, Hal, and Mercedes understood that traveling through the Antarctic was a harsh reality. Each one believed to be doing more than his share of the work, and the excess attention Hal and Charles gave Mercedes and their personal conflicts didn't permit them to see the suffering of their animals. In spite of all this incomprehension, Buck continued along at the head of the team. Sometimes, Buck pulled when he could; when Buck couldn't, the whip drove him again and again. They would set on their feet again and continue on the way, but it wasn't enough. Billie and Konna died. Only five dogs remained: Jose, Pike, Sol-leks, Teek, and Buck. Everybody was very weak and tired and continued without stopping.

In the meantime, it was beautiful spring weather. When Charles, Hal, Mercedes, and the huskies

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arrived at John Thornton's camp at the mouth of the White River, Hal was proud because they had arrived there. Later, Hal prepared to travel again toward his destiny. Sol-leks, Teek, Joe, and Pike made painful efforts to continue the journey. However, Buck didn't make any effort. Buck refused to move the heavy sled because in reality, Buck felt the ice was weak and that they would be traveling over a river, and he simply refused to lead his team to danger. But Hal didn't think so. So Hal gave Buck a terrible beating because he thought that Buck was too tired to pull the sled any more. Fortunately, Buck was saved by John Thornton who gave Hal a beating physically. A few minutes later, when the sled was a quarter of a mile away, Hal, Charles, Mercedes, and the surviving dogs in the sled team all drowned in the river. The bottom

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had dropped out of the trail. John and Buck watched the team disappear.

### Part VI

#### For the Love of a Man

In the warmer spring weather, Buck recuperated under the assistances of Thornton. His wounds healed, his muscles gained strength, and the flesh came back to cover his bones. Buck began a new life, and he began to feel a genuine passionate love for the first time. This he had never experienced before.

Thornton was the ideal master. This man had saved Buck's life. Buck loved Thornton as he had loved no other man. Thornton treated him as if he were his own child. Thornton used to take Buck's

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head roughly between his hands, resting his own head upon Buck's, shaking him back and forth, while calling him insults that to Buck were love words. Buck developed a deep affection for this man.

But in spite of this great love he bore John Thornton, which seemed to bespeak the soft civilizing influence, the strain of the primitive, which the Northland had aroused in him, remained alive and active. He became another dog. He had learned well the law of club and fang. Buck was merciless. Kill or be killed, eat or be eaten, was the law. But as often as he gained the soft unbroken earth and the green shade, the love for John Thornton drew him back to the fire again.

Buck saved Thornton's life more than twice. In Circle City, Thornton wanted to avoid a fight between

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two men, but one man began to hit Thornton. Buck did not think twice and immediately attacked this man. Finally, this man ended with his throat torn.

Later, Buck saved Thornton's life in a different form. Thornton and his partners, Hans and Pete, were lining a long and narrow poling boat down a bad stretch of rapids on the Forty Mile Creek. Suddenly, Thornton fell down into the river. He was carried down-stream toward the worst part of the rapids, a stretch of wild water in which no swimmer could live. Buck sprang into the water instantly. He tried to rescue Thornton, but he could not; the river was very dangerous. He returned to the bank. Thornton held on to a rock. Immediately, Hans and Pete attached a line to Buck's neck and shoulders, being careful that it should neither strangle him nor impede his swimming, and launched him into the stream. After some

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attempts, Thornton reached up and wrapped both arms around Buck's shaggy neck. Finally, they arrived to bank. Buck had saved Thornton's life.

In another occasion, Buck performed another exploit, one that put his name many notches higher on the totem pole of Alaskan fame. In the Eldorado Saloon, men were bragging about their dogs when a man claimed his dog could start and walk off with a sled loaded with five hundred pounds. But Thornton said that Buck could start with a thousand pounds and walk with it for a hundred yards. However, he did not know whether Buck could start with a thousand pounds. He had to ask for a thousand dollars to bet. Everybody went to the street to see the test. A lot of people bet against Buck. On the street, there was a sled with a thousand pounds of flour. Buck felt that in some way he had to do a great thing for John

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Thornton. Buck was put into the sled with his own harness. After that, Thornton knelt down by Buck's side and said that he had to show them that he loved him.

"Mush," said Thornton. Buck threw himself forward, tightening the traces with a jarring lunge; his whole body was gathered compactly together. After a great effort, Buck reached the finishing line. Men were shaking hands; hats were flying in the air. Thornton fell on his knees beside Buck. Head was against head, and he was shaking him back and forth. A man offered Thornton a thousand dollars for Buck, but Thornton told him, "Go to hell."

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## Part VII

### The Sounding of the Call

Now Buck had earned sixty hundred dollars in five minutes for John Thornton. John Thornton could travel with his partners into the East to look for a fabled lost mine, which had been sought by many men, but no one knew who had found the lost mine because it was steeped in tragedy and shrouded in mystery. So John, Pete, Hans, Buck and half a dozen other dogs went to the East on an unknown trail to find this wonderful treasure. They had traveled seventy miles up the Yukon. They passed by the Stewart River, the Mayo River and the Mc Questions River. Finally, they arrived at the Stewart River where it became a stream.

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For months, they went through huge forests. They had crossed the blue mountain lakes and unknown rivers without finding the Lost Cabin or the huge treasure. The spring came once more and after they had wandered for many days, they found a shallow place in a broad valley where gold shone. John, Pete, and Hans found the gold and worked very hard every day to sack the gold in moose hide bags.

Buck ventured out to explore the forest himself, following an inner voice within him that was the "call of the wild." In the forest, Buck became a killer. He could survive triumphantly in a hostile environment where only the strongest survived. Buck didn't understand why he could enter in the deep forest, run down dry water courses, creep, spy on the birds in the woods, or listen to the sleepy murmurs of the forest. Sometimes, Buck would hear a distinct and

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definite call, and he would go away from the camp, but his love for John Thornton was stronger than the call of the wild. So he returned. On one occasion Buck heard a long drawn howl; Buck knew it in the old familiar way. Buck went into the forest and made friends with a wild wolf, running with him through the trees. Buck was finally answering the call. But Buck had to return to Thornton's camp. The wolf mournfully howled for him to stay.

For four days and four nights, Buck didn't leave the camp. The wolf's howls in the forest began to sound more imperious than ever. While the days passed, the blood's longing became stronger than ever before in Buck. Buck had gained experience; he killed to eat. All the sights, sounds and events which required action Buck responded with lighting speed and with the most exquisite precision. Buck had

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decided to hunt the largest moose in a passing herd, spending days on this expedition, waiting patiently for the proper moments to attack, until finally the monstrous beast was killed by Buck. While Buck hunted the moose, everyone in the camp, including John Thornton, had been murdered by the Yeehats. Buck got revenge by killing the chief of the Yeehats and other Yeehats. The Yeehats were filled with terror and ran into the woods, thinking of Buck as an Evil Spirit. Buck felt great pride in himself because he had killed men.

A nearby wolf howl captured Buck's attention, and he followed the sound of a wolf pack. The call was stronger than ever before, and Buck was ready to obey since John was dead. The last tie was broken. Buck fought with several wolves first, and so Buck was accepted as one of their own. He met his

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old wolf friend and ran into the forest, becoming a wild wolf once more after generations of oppression at man's hands. Buck became a legend, murdering hunters and Yeehats in the forest. The Yeehats referred to Buck as the "Evil Spirit" and the "Ghost Dog." Buck ran at the head of the pack.

### 1.3 SETTING

The story begins in 1897, at the start of the Klondike gold rush, at the end of the nineteenth century in the cold, Arctic regions. Klondike is a region in the northwestern area of Canada, in the Yukon Territory. The discovery of gold in the Klondike attracts thousands of gold seekers to head for the far north. All of them desperately need dogs to pull sleds across the harsh arctic trails.

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The Call of the Wild begins at the Judge Miller's ranch in Santa Clara Valley. Santa Clara is a valley just south of the San Francisco Bay in Northern California in the United States. The valley was originally known as the Valley of Heart's Delight for the miles and miles of orchards, flowering trees, and plants. Until the 1960s, it had the largest fruit production. Buck enjoys living in this place. He likes to play in the grass. He would go hunting with Judge Miller's sons into the big forest which was near the house, which keeping Buck slim.

At this time, people used to buy big and strong dogs to use them as sled dogs to load gold and mail. For this reason, Buck is stolen and bought. He is carried to the north and his life changes abruptly. In the South, it is warm; food grows easily, and people enjoy their free time. In the North, the harsh cold

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conditions are very dangerous if one is not prepared, and people must work hard and suffer much to survive. This is Buck's new life in the cold.

The places where Buck has to work loading the Canadian Government mail are extreme. All the area of the Yukon Territory is covered by mountains, lakes, large rocks, glaciers, snowdrifts, and rivers. In winter time, this territory is covered with ice making transportation more difficult and even sometimes impossible. The places where Buck has to work loading the Canadian Government mail are extreme. In spring, the ice begins to melt making the lakes and rivers very dangerous. Some rivers are drafty making impossible and dangerous to cross with the load. There are not places where people can buy food, so the dogs have to carry the mail and the food making the load heavier.

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Seattle plays a very important role during the Klondike Gold Rush. Located in northwestern Washington, this coastal city is the last stop for many travelers before they enter Alaska, whether it is by train or by boat. Perrault and Francois purchase Buck when he is brought to Seattle after a long train ride. From Seattle, the men travel by boat to Dyea, Alaska.

Buck first arrives at Dyea, as his sled pulling adventure begins. He crosses some towns pulling the mail with the rest of the pack. Many times they arrive in Dawson city, which is located at the mouth of the Klondike River, where it meets the Yukon River. Dawson City was named after George Dawson, who explored the region with the “Canadian Geological Survey” in 1887. It was nicknamed the 'Paris of the North' due to the bustling activity that centered greatly

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upon the mining industry because of its proximity to the Klondike River.

Sometimes, Buck has to cross the Forty Mile Creek River, a dangerous river in the Yukon Territory where John Thornton nearly drowns. Buck comes to the rescue, however, and they are both pulled ashore by John Thornton's partners, Pete and Hans.

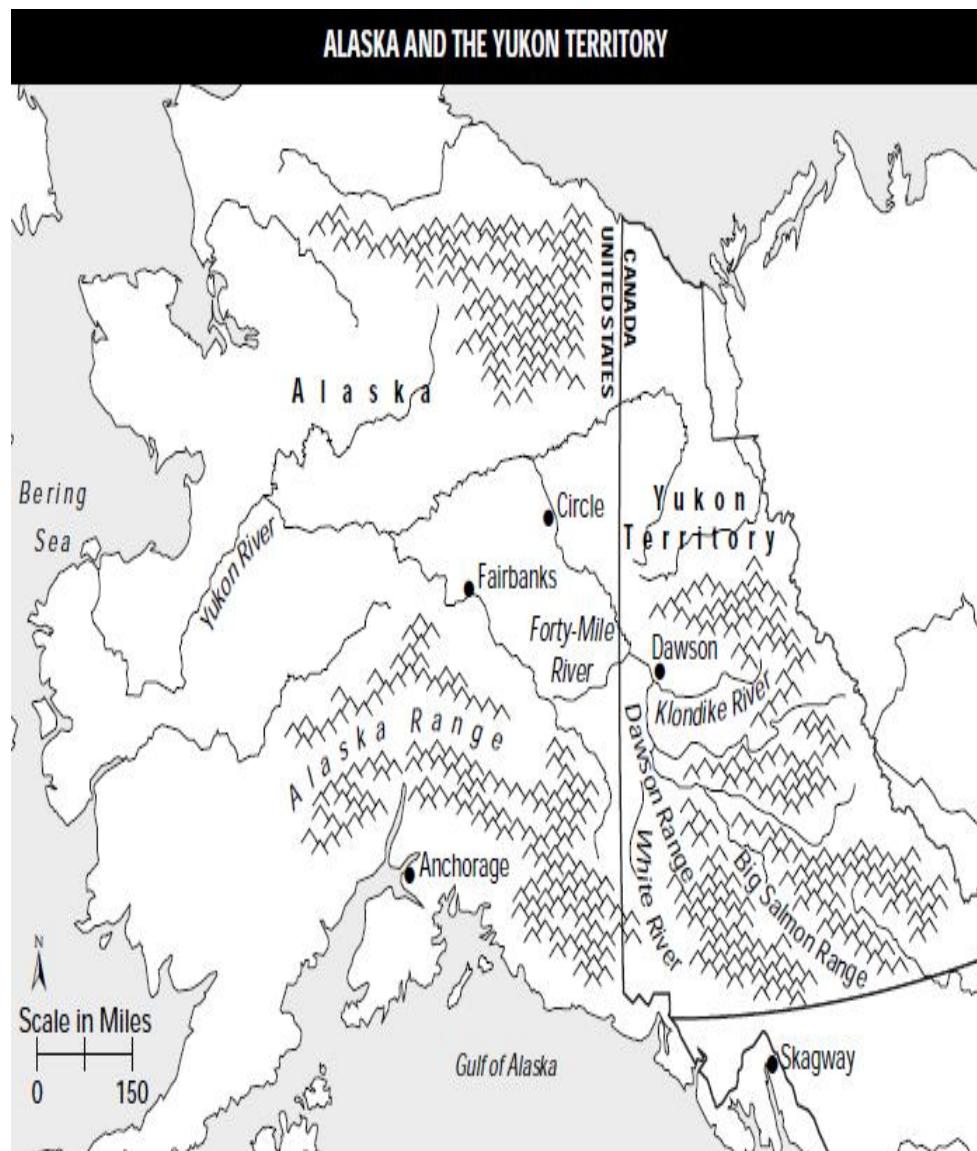
At the end of the story, John Thornton, his partners, and Buck arrive at Stewart region, and they discover an old cabin when they are searching for gold deep in the Yukon Territory. This old cabin belongs to the "Hudson's Bay Company," a fur-trading company based in central Canada, established in the first gold rush. Finally, they find gold. When John Thornton dies, Buck becomes wild and begins a new life in a wolf pack in this place.

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## CHAPTER IV

### LONDON'S LEGACY

#### 1. London's contribution to literature

Jack London's contribution includes an extraordinary literary output of over fifty books, hundreds of stories and thousands of articles, letters, compositions, non-fiction, autobiographical memoirs, plays, and journalism. Jack London is considered one of the America's most popular writers. London's work shows how the perception of his ideas appears in his essays, and how he has evolved successfully throughout the 20th century to reflect the changes in the American culture itself. In fact, he represents the American spirit which views life as a dynamic, rather than a static change. His philosophy of life is broad, to the extent of including contradictions, not narrow and harmonious with the selective ideas of an

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ideology. During his time as a writer, London has been the best-selling American writer throughout the world, and he has been translated more extensively than any other American novelist of the 20th century. In fact, he reconstructs literature with his true ideas which he lives in his journeys in the frozen Antarctic, in Hawaii, on the seashore, among others.

Jack London is among the first writers in the United States, because his work and style are extraordinary. He follows all of the time a strict writing regimen of 1,000 words a day. Over a period of eighteen years, he was able to produce high qualified works. Likewise, London always made a stop for socializing and debating about his work in order to obtain a valuable and excellent result. Thus, he used to sleep no more than four or five hours at night.

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On the other hand, London wrote a wide variety of prose and fiction, always looking for parallels between his fiction and his life to show his readers his philosophy of life through his books. His essays give the readers different stories which address questions that have long preoccupied them, including contradictions between his avowed socialism and unique belief in individualism, and his use of both naturalism and romanticism. His handling of racial and sexual issues is also explored. Researching the character of Jack London's female protagonists, American critics concluded that he had anticipated the appearance of the new woman, who decades later became so widespread in real life.



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His most famous works are “To Build a Fire,” (1902), a short story. The three novels are “The Call of the Wild,” (1903); “People of the Abyss,” (1903); “The Sea Wolf,” (1904), and “White Fang,” (1906). The two short fictions are “The Iron Heel,” (1908), and “Martin Eden,” (1909). By 1913, London was the best-paid writer in America.

Another important contribution to the American literature is that London starts new printing technologies, which permitted lower-cost production of magazines. During his time, the new printing results in a boom in popular magazines aimed at a wide public and a strong market for short fiction. For example, in 1900, London makes \$2,500 in writing, the equivalent of \$200,000 today. On the other hand, London is also one of the first celebrities to use his

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endorsement for commercial products in advertising, including dress suits, and grape juice.

His works have been published in 68 different languages. Many countries have given their tribute to Jack London's memory. In France, he has been pronounced as one of the greatest American writers. A seventy-volume edition of his collected works has been published, too. A twenty-volume edition has been published in the Danish language, and twenty-three volumes have been out in Norwegian. New biographical work has been published in England. New editions of London's books and new critical essays about him

In addition, during the 1980s, there was an evident interest in Jack London's life and work in the United States. Many collections of his impressive

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works were published such as one-volume editions with facsimile illustrations from the years of his life, two-volume works, and inexpensive paperback books. In 1988, a three-volume collection of London's correspondence made its very first appearance.

Nowadays, according to the American Professor, Wilson Ownbey, Jack London is being read more and more. Twenty-eight out of his fifty-three books are currently being reprinted in the United States. Recently, in the United States, collections of Jack London's science fiction, together with his works of the vagrancy period have been published.

On the other hand, London's works are published not only in school textbooks, but also in college texts, being useful for literary analysis.

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Hensley Woodbridge at Southern Illinois University compiled the Jack London's bibliography, publishing a magazine devoted exclusively to London, "Jack London Newsletter."

Another important step for London during his time as a writer is that his works have been made into films. His novel, The Sea-Wolf, became the basis for the first full-length American movie, and then The Call of the Wild was made movie, too. It gives extra promotion London's novels.

London's contributions are first-rate, and every essay provides fresh new insights into the complex creations of one of the America's greatest world authors, one of those whose literary genius is only now becoming fully recognized for his broad legacy to many readers. More than half a century passed since

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Jack London wrote his last work. London's work is still alive. His work and his life help reveal the active character of American people, their striving for a happy future and their courageous determination to fight for it.

### **2. London's contribution to Society**

Besides the large amount of literary works that Jack London provides us, he also gives us the several hundreds acres of land as part of his legacy. This land is a Historic State Park located in Glen Ellen, about 20 minutes in the north of Sonoma in California. This park permits the author's admirers to tour the ranch where London lived from 1911 until his death in 1916.

The park includes the "Cottage", residence where he wrote his books, short stories, articles, and

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letters while he ran various agricultural enterprises.

After London's death, his wife, Charmian, continued living in the cottage until her death in 1955. It was her wish that the ranch could be preserved in memory of Jack London and his work. The park also contains "The Wolf House," "The House of Happy Walls," a lake and a dam, and Jack London's grave. All of these places were London and his wife's creations, and they have been charged of history being the great legacy that Jack London has inherited us.

## THE BEAUTY RANCH

By 1905, Jack London has bought 130 acres of land in Sonoma Valley in California. When he buys the land, the soil is worn out. He has to work hard to become the soil productive. He also hires engineers to study the soil and become it useful. He terraces

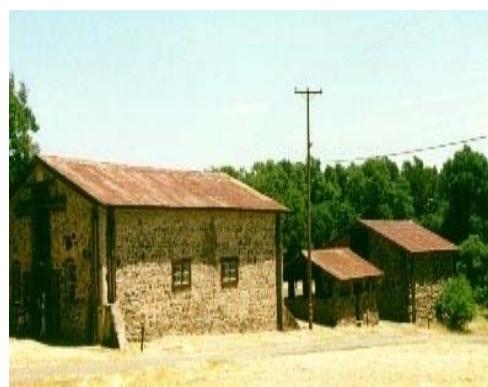
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the hillsides to lessen erosion, dams a creek to provide gravity-fed irrigation, and uses the manure from his cattle as fertilizer. After a big effort, he makes the soil be productive. He begins to plant fruit, grain, and vegetable crops in this area, and also he raises fine horses, pigs, cattle, and other animals as breeding stock. London has demonstrated new agricultural techniques which can be shared with farmers everywhere.



The Beauty Ranch includes some buildings which remain from an old winery. These buildings are the Sherry Barn, which is converted in a stable for his English Shire horses, the Manure Pit, which is used to store manure for later distribution in the fields.

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The Beauty Ranch also includes the “Cottage”. It is the place where Jack London has lived. This house is made of wood. It includes 3,000 square feet of living space. This “Cottage” is the place where Jack London has written the most of his stories and novels. In 2006, the cottage restored and opened to visitors.



## WOLF HOUSE

The Wolf House starts its construction in 1910, and it is nearly completed when it burns down in August, 1913.



The design of the Wolf House has 15,000 square feet of living space. Wolf House's

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architecture is designed by the architect Albert Farr from San Francisco. The Wolf House is made of volcanic rocks, which come from a quarry in the Valley of the Moon and redwood. The roof is constructed of Mexican-style tile. The fireplaces and the big windows give a special characteristic to the house. In addition, the house is rustic and lodgelike inside. The Wolf House has 26 rooms and 9 fire places. For London, his house is complete and efficient to work, live, and rest. London and his wife Charmian call it “The Big House,” but his friends change its name to “The Wolf House.” Its style makes it easy to see how big the house is intended to be. On August 22, 1913, Wolf House is burned by a fire of unknown origin.

Today, the Wolf House is visited by many tourists. This house has a valuable style to admire

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and to be observed by people who love art and craft.

Its stone walls, window openings, fireplaces, and other details seem to change as the time goes by. In addition, next to the house, there is a long outdoor pool stocked with a mountain bass. Inside, there is a library, a large workroom for Jack, two-story living rooms, a massive fireplace, and other details.

## HAPPY WALLS

Charmian, Jack London's wife, begins the construction of this house in 1919, three years after his husband dies. She



gives the name "Happy Walls" in contrast to the unhappy "Wolf House," which burned just before

Jack and Charmian moved in. Also, Charmian says

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that this house is the unique expression of her personality, she said, "me, Charmian!" However, at the beginning, she does not live in this house, but she preferred to live in the old cottage because the cottage remembers her Jack. She moves in until 1935.

The "Happy Walls" house is built similar to Wolf House; for example, the Spanish style, roof tiles and walls of stone, but it is much smaller and more formal. Much of the furniture is designed by Jack and Charmian. These designs were made for the wolf House, but then they are put on the Happy Walls house.

Today, this house is a museum. After her death in 1955, Charmian's will was that the house be used as a memorial to Jack London. This museum shows

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London collection of photographs and exhibits of the world famous author. Among the objects, there are London's typewriters of many of his original letters and manuscripts, souvenirs brought back from the South Seas, and a scale model of the "Snark", the sailing ship which he built and intended to sail around the world. On the walls, there are weapons from foreign countries and jewelry. The large living room has a fireplace, a grand piano, a large table, and couches along the windows. Jack's room is next to the living room. There is a bed, on which, as it is told, he spent more time reading than sleeping. Beside the bed, there is a chair, a recliner, some bookshelves, and a small table; all of them original belongings of the writer. The house has a library, which is furnished with equipment from London's study. In the bookcases, there are volumes of the

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Collected Works of Jack London. In a bureau there are stored all of his business papers which belonged to London.

This house also has a park visitor center where people can buy books by and about Jack London.

### DAM AND LAKE



Jack London had an idea to create a dam which holds water to use it for irrigation and at the same time to use it as a lake for

recreation. The lake created in 1914 when Jack London enjoyed his fame, and is the most well-paid and widely reading writer in America. The dam is built with stone forming a 5-acre lake in the hills above the ranch fields.

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Nowadays, the dam and the lake are in danger of collapse. The lake has shrunk to one quarter of its original size, and the surface is covered in algae. People who make studies about the lake say that it needs one million dollars to repair the dam, dredge the lake, and repair these areas.



In order to save the lake, Jack London's Foundation has a project to restore the dam and the lake by asking help to the government and individual people. The objective is restoring the lake to a clear, freshwater of approximately 4 acres, including the shoreline and the original trail. Dredge the bottom to remove silt, reduce the piled up silt at the rear of the lake. Use the dredged soil to fill in the erosion along

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Vineyard trail caused by the side spillway. Restore the valve system to allow all water to flow through the channel below the dam. If the lake and the dam are not repaired it will cause a multi million dollar erosion catastrophe.

## GRAVE

Jack London's grave forms part of Jack London State Historic Park because during all his life, Jack London makes an extraordinary effort every single day to become his Beauty Ranch in a successful business enterprise. Jack London writes, "Next to my wife, the ranch is the dearest thing in the world to me." Thus, Jack London wants his ashes to be spread all over the ranch because he loves his ranch, but Charmian and Eliza do not have the heart to do

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such a thing. Under their instruction, the grave is dug and a cement burial-vault is built on the left Cottage's garden. The urn with the ashes of this great man is put into the burial-vault. The grave is covered with soil and put a rock on top of the grave, together with a wreath made of ferns and Jack's favorite flowers primrose and Hawaiian lilies.

In 1955, when London's wife, Charmian dies, her ashes are buried next to Jack London's grave. The path that leads to the burial place of one of the great sons of America is made by those who came to visit and save respect to his talent.

### **Jack London State Historic Park offers to the visitors**

It is located approximately 50 miles north of San Francisco in Sonoma County. This historic park

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offers the visitors a great variety knowledge and entertainment, such us the cottage where London lived and wrote, his innovative approaches to ranching and farming, the Wolf House ruins, London's grave, the Pig Palace, the House of Happy Walls Museum, a library with some London's collection of manuscripts and other valuables, two unique silos, stone barns, ruins of a former winery, the dam, and nine miles of hiking and riding trails. Jack London State Historic Park offers the tourists a chance to see, enjoy, and feel the successes and disappointments in the life of Jack London in his precious Beauty Ranch.

On the other hand, Jack London State Historic Park offers other spectacular scenery. The tourists can camp, hike, and observe a variety of bird life and wildflowers and talk about the natural environment of

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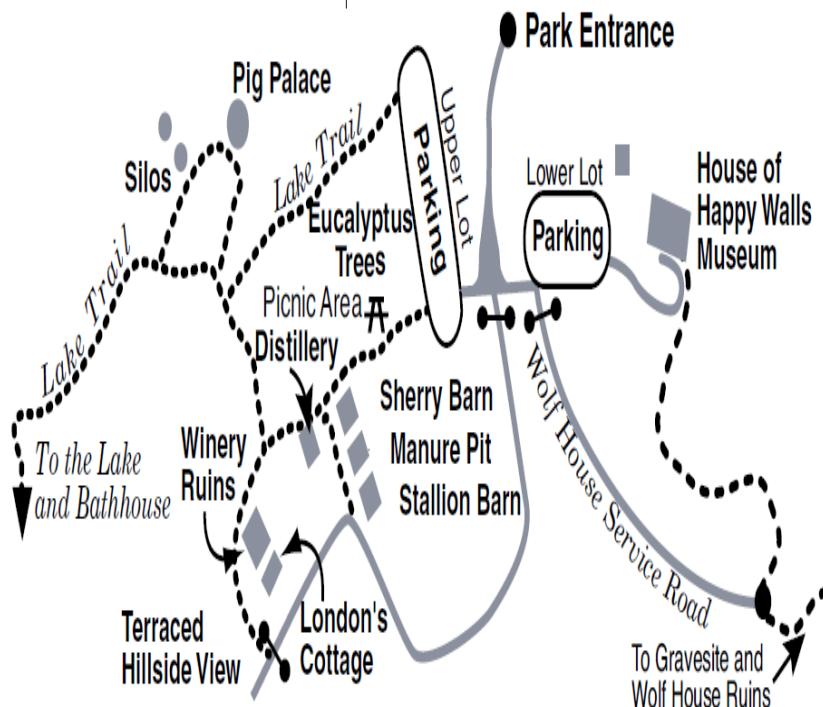
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the park. This place is ideal for hiking and camping and knowing more about nature. For instance, from the museum, the trail to Wolf House is a little over a half-mile long and slopes gently downhill. The trail wanders through a beautiful mixed forest of oaks, madrones, California buckeye, Douglas fir, Coastal Redwoods, Ferns, manzanita, a wide range of other shrubs, small flowering plants, and many other kinds of birds and other forms of wildlife.

### The Beauty Ranch Trail



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## Visits to the park

People who would love to know more about Jack London's work and his Beauty Ranch can visit his Beauty Ranch and observe, feel, and enjoy about its architecture and nature.

The cottage is open on weekends and holidays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A tour of the cottage is also included in all docent-led tours of the Beauty Ranch. The cottage features interpretive panels which describe the life and adventures of Jack London with photos and text. There is a video featuring a biography of Jack London, which is constantly played during the hours when the cottage is open to the public. There are items on display a scale model of the *Snark*, a complete set of first-edition books by Jack London, Charmian's Steinway piano, many of

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the items Jack and Charmian brought back from their travels around the world, and several displays depicting the life and adventures of Jack London, except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year Days.

People can enjoy a panoramic view of Jack London's Beauty Ranch and the surrounding mountains. There are two picnic areas: One area is in the “lower” parking lot near the museum, and the other is on a little knoll near the “upper” parking lot.

In addition, the hike to the lake can be more pleasant if it is timed so that lunch is enjoyed at the lake. There is one picnic table at this place. Many people prefer to sit on the dam while enjoying their lunch, but ground fires and portable stoves are prohibited in the park. The tours are guided by professional guides. Although the park is consider to

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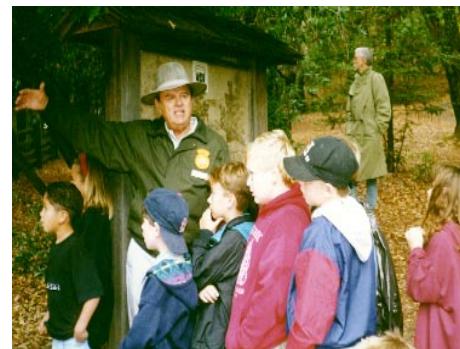


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be safe, visitors should be aware and always stay next to their guides in order to maintain order.

Jack London State Historic Park has volunteers in order to maintain the park in good conditions. There are many activities to do according to the skills and desires of the volunteers. These activities include leading tours, maintaining and improving trails, staffing museums and visitor centers, for visitors who need assistance or information, leading educational walks for students and doing office work. Also, there are some benefits which may include free passes to parks and free camping permits.

During this time some volunteers help in leading tours and promote the educational and



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interpretive activities about Jack London Historic Park, such as Jack's cottage, the Wolf House ruins, the House of Happy Walls Museum, camping, hiking, and other ones.

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## CONCLUSION

Jack London is considered one of the greatest writers in the world. His extensive list of literary works confirms this fact. Those who read and study Jack London's life and works become inspired. London is most remarkable for his books, The Call of the Wild, White Fang, and The Sea-Wolf, and for his short stories, such as "To Build a Fire," "The Law of Life," "The White Silence."

London has written about the sufferings of human beings and about their perseverance, about unselfish love and passionate hate, about striving to build a just society. London's books are full of sympathy for laboring people, for people of high dignity and courage; for example in his non-fiction

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work, People of the Abyss, London condemned any exploitation of one human being by another.

His childhood was difficult. His family was poor. He had to work when being a child to get money to support his mother. He did not finish the college; however, this was not an obstacle to become a great writer. His literary career began with an intensive period of self-education.

Jack London was a prolific writer. During his short life, he wrote fifty books, many articles and short stories. Besides being one of the most widely read authors, he was also the highest-paid. Nevertheless, Jack London did not spend all of his time writing. He was an oyster pirate, a government patrolman in San Francisco Bay, a sailor, a factory worker, a gold prospector in the frozen Klondike, a war

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correspondent, a reporter, a family man, a landowner, and of course a true American writer.

London's novels are usually based on nature and adventure, coming from real life experiences, which appealed to millions of readers. He used his adventures in the Klondike as a gold seeker to write The Call of the Wild, White Fang, and To Build a Fire. These are not just simple dog stories since they talk about close relationships between animals and humans. His famous novel, The Call of the Wild is an example of it. London writes a story giving the animals the characteristics of human behavior.

Besides the large amount of literary work that Jack London offers, he also provides his ranch, the place where he lived for few years. At the present time this ranch is a museum and an estate park. Jack

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London's ranch offers people the possibility to transport Jack London's time and to have contact with the nature.

This present work affords the readers information about the life and works of one of the greatest writers in the world, Jack London.

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