

Jack london



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Some say he was “ the successor to Poe” (Unger). Was he truly the successor to Edgar Allen Poe? Jack London believed in a fine line between Social Darwinism and social justice, and individualism and socialism. He reflected his beliefs into all of his novels and stories. American writer, Jack London, made a successful career out of his experiences and adventures. Jack “ London was born in San Francisco, the illegitimate child of Flora Wellman” on January 12, 1876 (Jack London St). It appears that “ Flora was an ardent spiritualist, and seances were offered” (Unger).

Research reveals that London’s father by only blood “ William Henry Chaney” was “ an itinerant Irish astrologer” (London Jack). Jack London was “ deserted by his father” (London Jack) at an early age. Records state that Jack’s “ mother had married John London, a widower with two daughters” (Jack London St) before he was one year old. John London was a “ lowan immigrant worker” (London Jack). It is believed that this is from “ whom Jack London took his surname” (London Jack). Evidence points out that William Chaney had “ always denied the paternity of Jack London” (Unger).

It is believed that “ poverty would prove to be the strongest feature of London’s childhood” (Jack London St). As shown, Jack London did not have much of a life at an early age. Jack London’s school life did not last very long. London “ entered the working world at age nine” (Jack London St). Since Jack London was “ denied a formal education” he “ compensated through voracious reading” (Jack London St). He bought a small boat and learned to sail” when he was thirteen (Unger). When Jack London was 15, he “ found a job in a local cannery “ after his “ stepfather was struck by a train” (London Jack).

London eventually quit his job and entered the world of crime. He survived “ by thieving oysters from the commercial beds around San Francisco” (Unger). Also when London was 15, he began to “ drink very heavily and nearly killed himself in the process” (Unger). Jack London then became a legit sailor, instead of a pirate, when he “ shipped on a sealing vessel, the Sophie Sutherland” (Unger). London stayed there for seven months, but then “ returned to Oakland” (Jack London St). London’s adventures continued after his voyage for a few more years.

He then became a “ member of Coxney’s ‘ Army’” (Jack London St). The army was “ traveling to Washington in a quest for government assistance” during the Panic of 1893 (Jack London St). After London left Coxney’s army, “ he traveled “ alone and panhandled his way to Niagara, New York” (Jack London St). He was then arrested for “ vagrancy in June 1894” (Jack London St). Jack London then served a “ 30-day sentence [and then] he returned to California” (Jack London St). When London came back to California, he began “ attending Oakland high School” after turning nineteen (Jack London St).

Despite his terrible early education, Jack London “ successfully completed the entrance examination for the University of California at Berkley” (Jack London St). His “ college experience proved short lived” and he dropped out at the end of the first semester (Jack London). As shown, Jack London’s school years were unusual but they helped him start his career. Jack London had an eventful adult life directly after college. Jack London had different political views than most people and “ became an active member of the Socialist Labor Party in 1896” (Jack London St).

London then began “bombarding San Francisco publishers,” but his efforts were only “rewarded with little rejection forms” (Jack London St). In the summer of 1897 he was one of the “migrants to the gold fields of the Klondike” (Jack London St). Despite his trials he endured a “distinct absence of luck” (Jack London St). Jack London then realized the “epic and allegorical potential of the world around him” and came home “reeling with ideas” (Jack London St). When London returned home he “learned that his stepfather had died” (London).

In April of 1900, London published “his first novel *The Son of the Wolf*” (Jack London St). The day that his first book appeared on the market “Jack London married Elizabeth Madder” (London). After London got married his wife gave birth to “two daughters, Joan and Bess, in 1901 and 1902” (London). Jack London’s life right after college was very eventful. Jack London’s sagas of his Yukon adventures are only one part of his multifaceted career. After London had established himself as a great writer, he “embarked on a journalistic mission for the American Press Association” (Jack London St).

Jack London’s original assignment to “report on the Boer War in South Africa” was cancelled before he left for it (Jack London St). Instead London “opted to examine the urban slums of England” (Jack London St). In order to do this, he “donned a suitable disguise and lived in the squalor of London’s East End” (Jack London St). The “product” of his adventure was “his non-fiction study *The People of the Abyss* [1903]” (Jack London St). Jack London later “ranked this work as his greatest accomplishment” (Jack London St).

London was later “inspired to write a dog story,” and wrote until the story became a full-fledged novel called “The Call of the Wild” (Unger). Macmillan Company gladly accepted the masterpiece for “\$2000 for all rights to the book in lieu of royalties” (Unger). In January of 1904, Jack London “accepted an assignment from William Randolph Hearst [owner of San Francisco Examiner] to cover the Russo-Japanese War” (London). When London returned home, he “divorced his wife and married Charmian Kittredge, in November 1905” (London).

After this marriage he wrote some of his most important political writings including “The Iron Heel [1908], a classic of socialist writings” (London). Jack London’s writing career was very diverse. As Jack London’s literary career progressed, he continued his involvement in an assortment of unusual pursuits. In 1905, Jack London was unsuccessful as the “Socialist Candidate in the campaign for mayor of Oakland” (Jack London St). Later that year, London “purchased a large tract of land in California’s Sonoma Valley” to enjoy the lifestyle of the country (Jack London St).

One of London’s largely known adventures was an “attempt to sail around the world in a ship of his own design” (Jack London St). He wanted to build a boat and easily spent \$50,000 dollars on it and built a “boat that was not as good as one he could have bought for \$5000” (Unger). His original plan was to “depart from San Francisco in the fall of 1906 and spend the next seven years circling the globe” (Jack London). The Snark, London’s boat, ended up “slowing construction which delayed the trip for six months” (Jack London St).

The final product would end up with “ major repairs required when the party reached Hawaii in May of 1907” (Jack London St). The voyage was “ terminated at the end of 1908” because London and his crew were “ suffering from an assortment of health problems” (Jack London). Throughout all of Jack London’s suffering and setbacks “ the sailor continued to write” (Jack London St). As shown, Jack London continued to pursue his unusual interests throughout his life. Jack London “ dramatized atavism, adaptability, and the appeal of the wilderness” in his many books (Jack London EBSCOhost).

His work is often identified as “ literary nationalism” because of his “ writings of images of brute force, [and] of environmental and biological struggles” (London). Although his novels and short stories are amazing, “ London’s strength as a writer rests more upon his storytelling abilities than upon his philosophical bent” (London). In some of London’s final published stories he displayed a “ fantasy of the future that [was a] terrifying anticipation of fascism” (Jack London EBSCOhost). Although London’s “ hastily written output [of novels] is of uneven quality” (Jack London EBSCOhost).

Jack London’s success led to a change in his style. *Call of the Wild* and *White Fang* were some of Jack London’s first massive hits in America. London wrote *Call of the Wild* in “ just over a month” (Unger). In this big hit by London the “ values of love and fair play are central to the story” (Unger). Buck [the dog and main character of the story] begins “ happy and satisfied in a setting of comfort and love” but eventually is transformed into a wolf after he “ fled into the wilderness” to join a wolf pack (Unger).

About three years after London wrote *The Call of the Wild* London began a “companion piece” later named *White Fang* (Unger). In *White Fang* it is basically a reverse of *The Call of the Wild*. In the “first book he had shown a domestic dog reverting to a wolf, [but in] the later one told how a wolf was domesticated” (Unger). Both books are amazing, and have received very high marks on reviews. As shown, Jack London's books have the material to be his most significant pieces. Jack London died on November 22, 1916.

In the past few years he had experienced “constant headaches, agonizing uremia and nephritis, rheumatism, dysentery, and excess weight” that were all said to be because of his heavy eating and drinking (Unger). London was “found in a coma at Glen Ellen after an overdose of morphine” (London). He died later that night. By the time Jack London died, he had written fifty books within his short 40 year lifetime. In conclusion, Jack London had great talent when it came to writing, and his books continue to entertain, nearly a century later.