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978-1-108-05017-3 - The Voyage of the *Jeannette*: The Ship and Ice Journals of George W. De Long Lieutenant-Commander U.S.N. and Commander of the Polar Expedition of 1879–1881: Volume 1

Edited by Emma De Long

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### The Voyage of the *Jeannette*

George W. De Long (1844–81) was a US Navy officer who set out to find a new route to the North Pole via the Bering Strait. During his voyage, which left San Francisco in 1879, he claimed the De Long Islands for the USA. But when his vessel, the *Jeannette*, sank, he and his crew abandoned ship, and he eventually died of starvation in Siberia. His doomed expedition is documented in these two volumes, compiled by his wife Emma from his journals and the testimony of the mission's survivors. First published in 1883, Volume 1 begins by sketching De Long's early years and his preparations for the expedition. The remaining chapters record the crew's experiences in the treacherous Arctic, and their brave but vain attempts to save the *Jeannette*. Providing a vivid account of nineteenth-century polar exploration, it remains of great interest to scholars of geography and maritime studies.

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*The Ship and Ice Journals  
of George W. De Long  
Lieutenant-Commander U.S.N.  
and Commander of the  
Polar Expedition of 1879–1881*

VOLUME 1

EDITED BY EMMA DE LONG



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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108050173](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108050173)

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2012

This edition first published 1883

This digitally printed version 2012

ISBN 978-1-108-05017-3 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

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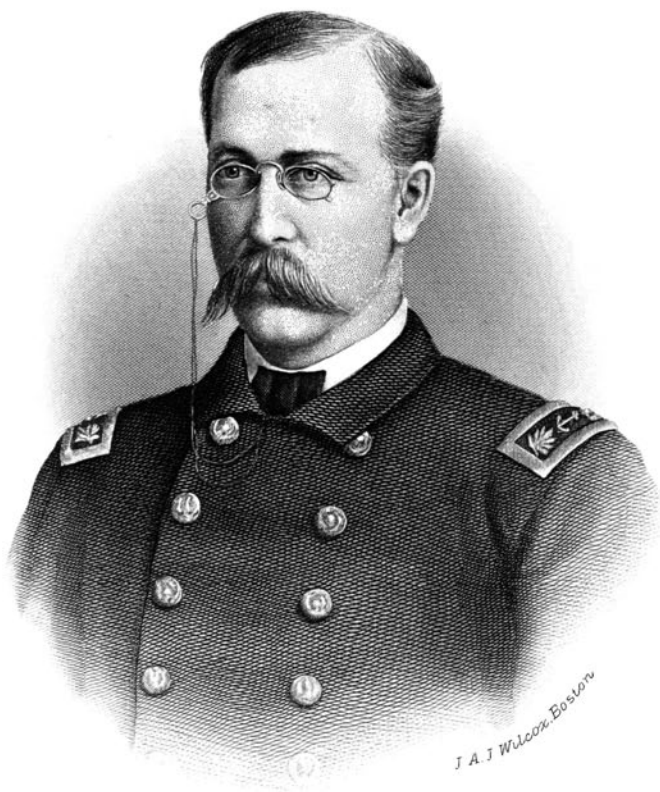
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*George W. De Long*

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THE  
VOYAGE OF THE JEANNETTE.

THE SHIP AND ICE JOURNALS

OF

GEORGE W. DE LONG,

LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER U. S. N., AND COMMANDER  
OF THE POLAR EXPEDITION OF 1879–1881.

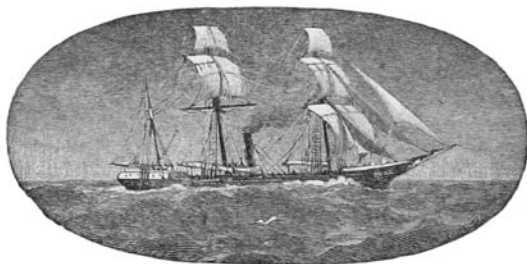
EDITED BY HIS WIFE,

EMMA DE LONG,

*WITH A STEEL PORTRAIT, MAPS, AND MANY  
ILLUSTRATIONS ON WOOD AND STONE.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON  
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH AND COMPANY  
1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1883

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## PREFACE.

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IN the preparation of this volume the editor has availed herself first, of the private papers of Captain De Long, and her own recollection and notes; and secondly, of the testimony given in public and private by the survivors of the Jeannette. It seemed right, in a work which is essentially a tribute to human worth, to introduce the narrative with a brief biographical sketch of the commander of the expedition up to the inception of the undertaking, with special reference to the qualities of character and education of circumstances which led directly to his proposal of an Arctic expedition. The preparations for the voyage continue this personal sketch, as well as put the reader in possession of all necessary facts relating to the plans of the projectors and the measures taken to ensure success.

So much was requisite as an introduction to the narrative itself. For that recourse was had to the letters written by Captain De Long after leaving San Francisco, and before dismissing the consort which accompanied the Jeannette to St. Lawrence Bay; to the private journal which he kept from the beginning of the voyage to the sinking of the ship, and to the two small journals in which he recorded the fortunes of the expedition after the ship was abandoned.

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In preparing the closing chapters of the work, the testimonies given by the survivors have been carefully compared and made the basis for a consecutive narrative which should complete the history of the expedition.

The illustrations have been studied with great care. The smaller ones in the text have been reproduced from diagrams and sketches made in the journals, by Mr. Newcomb, the naturalist of the party, and by Captain Grönbeck of the *Lena*; the larger ones have been from the hand of Mr. M. J. Burns, whose experience in the Arctic had given him special facility for making truthful renderings, and his work has been carefully examined and approved by officers of the expedition. The portraits have been taken from the best sources. That of Captain De Long is from a painting by Mr. E. W. Perry; that of Mr. Bennett was engraved for this work; and those of the officers and other members of the expedition are from the best photographs obtainable. The frontispiece of the second volume is from a drawing made on the spot by Mr. A. Larsen. The maps were drawn for the work, with the exception of that descriptive of the route of the *Little Juniata*, which is a reduction of the government map in the "Voyage of the *Polaris*."

The scientific results of the expedition are only partially recorded in the text of the work and in papers included in the Appendix. The government will hereafter issue the notes of the naturalist, the meteorological observations, and the electrical and auroral

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observations of Lieutenant Chipp, and it has been thought advisable, therefore, to omit them from this work.

The thanks of the editor are due to Mr. James Gordon Bennett for his constant sympathy, interest, and aid; to Chief-Engineer Melville for his frequent assistance and special contributions; to the other survivors of the Jeannette for their cheerful and ready response to all requests for information; to Colonel W. B. Remey, Judge Advocate General U. S. N., and Lieutenant W. H. Jaques, U. S. N. Finally, the editor desires to acknowledge gratefully the consideration and kindness which her work has met with from the Secretary of the Navy and other members of the Department at Washington.

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