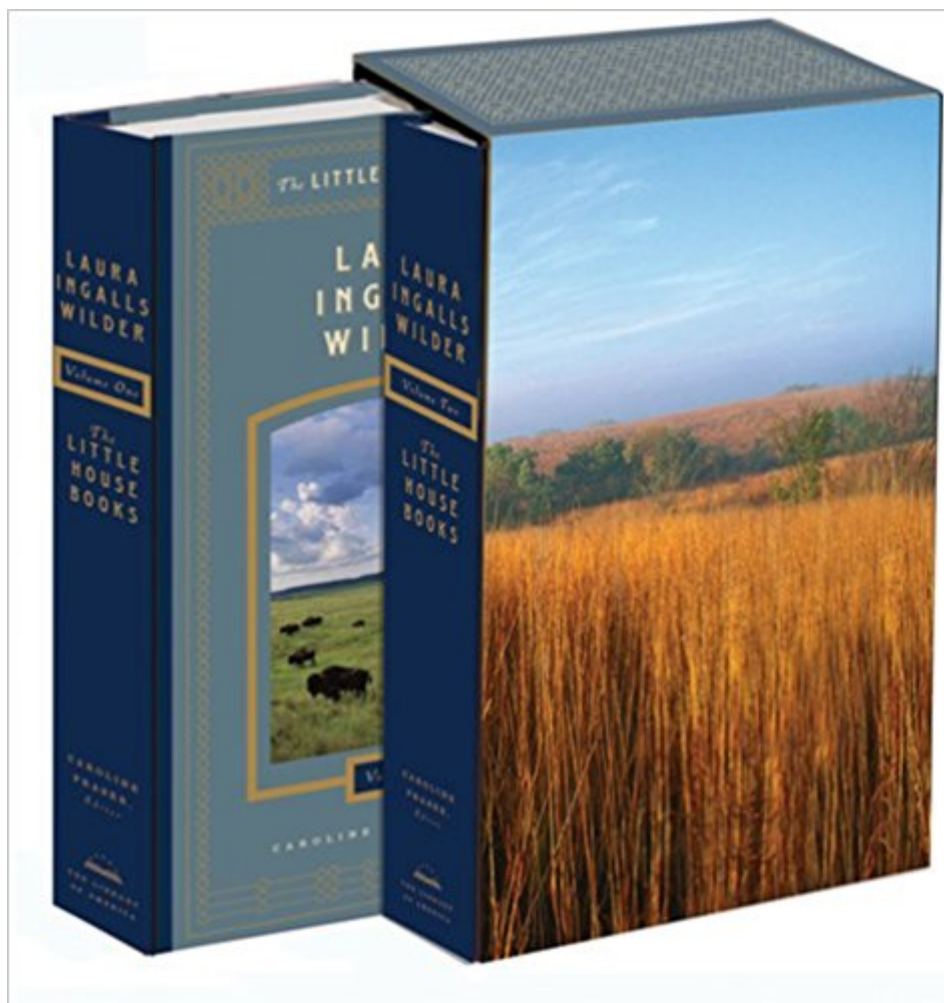


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The Little House Books (2 Volume Set)



Synopsis

Originally published from 1932 to 1943, Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House books are classics of children's literature, beloved by millions. But readers who last enjoyed them as children may be astonished at the quiet poetry of Wilder's prose and the force and poignancy of her portrait of the lives of American pioneers. Now The Library of America and editor Caroline Fraser present a definitive boxed set that affirms Wilder's place in the American canon, reintroducing these enduring works to readers young and old. Here, for the first time in two collectible hardcover volumes, are all eight Little House novels—brilliant narratives of the early life of Laura Ingalls and her family as they grow up with the country in the woods, on the plains, and finally in the small towns of the advancing American frontier—plus the posthumous novella *The First Four Years*, which recounts the early years of the author's marriage to Almanzo Wilder. As a special feature, four rare autobiographical pieces address the need for historical accuracy in children's literature, reveal real life events not included in the novels, and answer the inevitable question: what happened next?

Contains:

VOLUME ONE *Little House in the Big Woods* *Farmer Boy* *Little House on the Prairie* *On the Banks of Plum Creek* Library of America volume #229

VOLUME TWO *By the Shores of Silver Lake* *The Long Winter* *Little Town on the Prairie* *These Happy Golden Years* *The First Four Years* Library of America volume #230

Each volume features deluxe three-part bindings, a newly-researched chronology of Laura Ingalls Wilder's life and career, and helpful notes. The volumes are also available separately with standard Library of America series bindings and jackets.

Book Information

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Age Range: 10 and up

Customer Reviews

I got "Little House in the Big Woods" when I was 7. I remember crying when I finished it because I wanted the story to go on and on. I pushed and prodded my Mom to get the rest of the books. As quickly as they appeared as birthday and Christmas presents, I devoured them. Almost 35 years later, I can say that I have read almost every book that has been written by or about Laura. Many other reviewers have pointed out the especially wonderful aspects of the books. The narrator ages as Laura grows up. (What a cool concept!) The story of 4 year old Laura's Christmas in Wisconsin is as real and moving as the description of 18 year old Laura falling in love with Almanzo in Dakota Territory. The images are always fresh, and the stories always epitomize wholesomeness. There is a consistency all the way through "These Happy Golden Years" that shows that great care and skill were employed to make the series unwaveringly good. The real life of Laura was strenuous and uncertain. She was poor most of her young life. She and Almanzo faced great loss and always worked very hard to run their farm. The many moves made by the Ingalls and Wilder families were made to escape difficulties like failed crops or to improve bad situations like poor health. According to available accounts, Laura did not stay in close contact with her family after she left Dakota. Her relationship with Almanzo does not seem to have been remarkable, and her relationship with her only child, Rose, was strained. However, all of these mundane details coalesced to create some of the best books ever written. Many readers do not know that Rose was the impetus for the Little House phenomenon.

One of the biggest fallacies about the Little House books is that they are "girls' books." It was that perception of the books, as well as the sappy, smaltzy "Little House on the Prairie" TV show, that kept me from reading these books until I was in my early teens. One day just out of sheer boredom, I read my sister's worn copy of "Little House in the Big Woods." What a great book! A story of a family's survival in the wilderness with tales of bears, panthers, wolves, hunting, and all sorts of neat information on how pioneer people lived. "Little House in the Big Woods" erased my conception of the Little House books as "girlie stuff" and I promptly read the rest of the series. Yes, some elements will appeal more to girls especially Mrs. Wilder's very detailed descriptions of women's clothing. (I generally just read what color the dress was and then skip over the rest of the description.) However, her stories about Indians, wild animals, blizzards, grasshopper storms, bandits, bullies threatening to beat up teachers, unruly students, unhinged farmwives, bossy older sisters, and a

whole host of other great stuff will make these books fascinating to anyone interested in pioneer life regardless of gender. Despite my age I still consider these among my favorite books. They are truly heartwarming classics with the magnificent illustrations of Garth Williams. Laura, the main character, will appeal to almost anyone- honest, principled, courageous, industrious, but with very human elements- including envy of her older sister and holding grudges, especially against snooty Nellie Oleson and her teacher (and future sister-in-law) Eliza Jane Wilder.

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