



## Charles Darwin's Letters

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This collection of letters, chosen from the first seven volumes of *THE CORRESPONDENCE OF CHARLES DARWIN*, provides insight into the life of the famous naturalist from his student days at the University of Edinburgh until just after one of the pivotal events in the history of Western civilization, the publication of the *ORIGIN OF SPECIES*. Editor Frederick Burkhardt has selected letter to family, friends, and major figures in science.

Darwin's letters are published with the original spelling and punctuation retained, but without the elaborate editorial apparatus used in *THE CORRESPONDENCE OF CHARLES DARWIN* to reveal interlineations, cross-outs, and other changes made by Darwin while writing. Supplemented by editorial commentary, a biographical register with succinct identifications, a bibliography of Darwin's publications, and a reading list of books for those readers seeking further historical, scientific, and biographical exposition, these letters from Darwin (no letters to Darwin are included in this collection) reveal Darwin as brother, husband, father, and scientist. Stephen J. Gould supplies an analytical and descriptive foreword which is both a paean to epistolary books and a framework for understanding for the letters that follow.

Darwin was a fine letter-writer. Whether he was writing about life on board ship, travel in rural South America, his geological theories, or the death of his daughter, he provided clear, animated descriptions, free of self-consciousness. Those looking to gain a flavor of Darwin's correspondence and of the man will enjoy *CHARLES DARWIN'S LETTERS*. The reader desiring more detail, fuller context, and greater knowledge of what Darwin's correspondents were writing to him must turn to the more extensive collection of letters in the volumes of the *CORRESPONDENCE OF CHARLES DARWIN*.

## Sources for Further Study

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