

Lulita Crawford Pritchett
Author, Poet, Historian



March 7, 1906 – February 11, 1991
Remembrances on her Centennial Birthday

by James Logan Crawford



Carr, Lulita, Margaret, Uncle John, and Lulie, about 1940

Cover Picture — Lulita Crawford Pritchett, July, 1975

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FOREWORD

I originally wrote this booklet for a brown bag luncheon talk honoring Lulita at the Tread of Pioneers Museum on March 8, 2006. Since that talk, my sister Nancy and I searched through her house for more old letters, newspapers, and photographs. We found a significant number of items, including a dozen more magazines containing stories written by Lulita, two notebooks in which she wrote finished drafts of over 100 poems, and a small memorandum notebook in which she recorded entries whenever she submitted manuscripts to publishers. The bibliography that I had prepared for the first edition of this booklet was woefully incomplete. For this edition I have included all of the newly found information, plus the text of the talk my sister Nancy had prepared for the brown bag luncheon. She was unable to give the talk herself due to laryngitis, and had written it down so I could read it for her.

James L. Crawford
June 2006

December 2007: I cleaned up the bibliography a little bit and added some unpublished works.

June 2009: I corrected a date for one of the Ranch Romance stories.

January 2011: I corrected more dates for Ranch Romance stories, and added a couple more newspaper stories.

September 2021: I corrected a typo in the Foreword and several in the Remembrances section.

BIOGRAPHY

Lulita Crawford Pritchett was born at 7:45 am, March 7, 1906 at the Pritchett home at 2735 Boulevard “F” in Denver, Colorado. Her sister, Margaret Elizabeth Pritchett, wrote the following letter in support of filing a delayed birth certificate for Lulita:

March 30, 1962

I wish to certify in regard to my sister’s name that in our Family Bible and in her Baby Book her name is listed as: Lulie Crawford Pritchett. My sister is named after our mother whose first name was Lulie. Our mother’s sister was visiting us at the time of “Lulie’s” birth. She did not want another Lulie in the family; so our Papa said: “We’ll call her “Little Lulie” in Spanish which is LULITA for a girl!” That is how, ever since, my sister has gone by the name of Lulita Crawford Pritchett.

Her mother, Lulie Margie Crawford, was the oldest child of the pioneering Crawford family that founded the town of Steamboat Springs. Her father, Carr Waller Pritchett, Jr., was one of the leading mining engineers in the U.S. He came from a family of highly successful scientists. His father, Rev. Carr Waller Pritchett, founded Pritchett School Institute and the Morrison Observatory in Glasgow, Missouri. His older brother, Henry S. Pritchett, had a long academic career including president of M.I.T. and president of the Carnegie Foundation. After graduating from Washington U. in St. Louis, Carr worked at the Gilpin Mine in northeast Routt Co., where he met Lulie. They were married in 1892 in Steamboat Springs, and moved to Old Mexico, where Carr worked for eight years for the Philadelphia Smelting & Refining Company, owned by the Guggenheim brothers. Their first daughter, Margaret, was born there in 1893. In 1900 the family moved to Denver, and two years later they bought the house at 2735 Blvd F, later renamed Federal Boulevard. Lulita was born in this house, and the house still belongs in the Crawford family. Carr’s work took him to many different parts of the country, not only the mining areas of the west including New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, and Alaska, but also to New York City where he had an office for awhile. Occasionally the family would travel with him, but for the most part they stayed home.

While growing up in Denver, Lulita attended the Boulevard School, which was just 4 blocks away on Blvd F. She described her childhood in a letter dated March 13, 1983:

When I was a child, I had this big yard to live in, and several nearby vacant lots that had once been an apple orchard. We dug caves, picked sand lilies, found horned toads, and climbed trees. We always had a dog and cat. Roller skates were the style, and I had a tricycle. Then, in the summer, we went to Steamboat.

They bought a ranch in Steamboat Springs on Onyx Mountain, which is now called Emerald Mountain. In 1912 Carr expanded the ranch to 765 acres, and raised award-winning bulls. The family lived there summers and for three winters, from



1919-1922. She wrote a diary for one of those years (see *Lulita Crawford Pritchett's 1921 Diary*).

When in Steamboat, Lulita played with her cousin Jimmy (James Daniel Crawford), and listened eagerly to the pioneer stories of her grandparents, James and Margaret Crawford, her parents, and most of all her two uncles, John and Logan. Lulita attended Steamboat Springs High School, graduating as valedictorian in the class of 1922 just after turning 16. She walked to school from the Pritchett ranch, but at lunch would go to her grandparents' house, the big stone mansion on Crawford Avenue, where her Aunt Rosa (her great uncle Henry Crawford's daughter-in-law) would fix her lunch.

Carr became restless, considered the ranch a financial failure, and wanted to get back to mining. Despite the protests of Lulie and the girls, they moved back to their home in Denver, which they had been renting, and Carr sold the ranch in October 1923. Lulita's

heart was always in Steamboat. In a 1944 letter to her Uncle John, after her father died, Lulita wrote:

We have played with the idea of selling out here and moving to Steamboat. I could teach if there was an opening. We are all often very lonesome here – mother especially, and we are not by choice city dwellers...it is unsatisfying to keep on living the kind of life you don't want to.

Back in Denver, Lulita graduated with honors in 1926 from the University of Denver, and from the Parks School of Business Administration in 1927, where she also taught for several years. She lived at home in a female environment since Carr was often away for work. A letter from Carr indicates that he wanted Lulita to quit working so she could spend her time taking care of Lulie and Carr as they got older. In fact, Lulita did quit her teaching job at the Parks School by 1930 and did not take another full time job for over 10 years.

There is no indication that there was ever a man in Margaret's life, and only a rumor of one in Lulita's life. At one point in the 1920s or 30s, Lulita was friends with a neighbor, the son of the man who had developed the land and built the Pritchett home. This son, however, was a rather wild motorcycle mechanic, and when it was discovered that he had an affair with his maid, Lulita stopped seeing him and never again became close to a man.

In 1940 Lulita got her second job as a file clerk or, as Lulita preferred to be called, "secretary", with A. R. Wilfley and Sons, Inc., an engineering firm in Denver. She was determined not to sit at home all her life as her sister Margaret did, and to get some independence from her sister and mother. Though she did not particularly like office work, she was glad to be out of the house and earning a living on her own. During WWII, she was upgraded to purchasing agent, and she also handled the exports because she knew Spanish and French. When the war ended, a returning soldier took over her job and she became his assistant. She retired in January, 1974 after 34 years of office work.

Once their parents were dead (Carr in 1943 and Lulie in 1952), Lulita and Margaret made a number of trips outside Colorado but always by car or train; Lulita never took a plane trip. Their first trip in 1953 was to Sedalia, Missouri, where the Crawfords started on their pioneering journey to Colorado and Steamboat Springs as

told in Lulita's book *The Shining Mountains*. They saw the house where James H. Crawford was born, and visited with some cousins. Their visit warranted a lengthy article in the Sedalia newspaper, which talked about the book and then said:

The book is read every year by some of the teachers at Horace Mann and Whittier Schools and the children then write letters to Miss Pritchett... and always she answers with one long letter, which always delights the children.

Later trips included three cross country treks to visit second cousins, two to Tennessee and one to New England. Lulita was very happy in 1958 to visit M.I.T., where her illustrious uncle left his mark. In 1968 the sisters drove to Billings, Montana to visit their cousin Jimmy, and in the late 1960s they went with their Steamboat friend Lucille Butler on trips to see Mt. Rushmore, Zion National Park, and several places in Wyoming.

Lulita lived her retired life alone, since Margaret died in 1972. While Lulita was at work, her home became easy prey for a burglar who ransacked the house on Sept. 21, 1972 and stole jewelry and all of the silverware from her grandfather James H. Crawford. She often lamented that she was unable to give the silverware to the next generation of Crawfords. She added bars to her windows and took precautions, but never felt comfortable leaving her home for long trips, and never again traveled outside Colorado.

In 1988 Lulita was getting too old to live in her big house by herself, and she put the house on the market. When her cousin Jimmy's wife, Ruth Crawford, offered to come help her prepare to show the house, she politely refused, saying that she had lived alone so long that she could best keep working alone. Her neighborhood had gone downhill, and was being encroached by commercial development with a large Safeway store across the street, and the Denver Bronco's Mile High Stadium a mile down the street. The only people interested in the property just wanted the



House in Sedalia where James H. Crawford was born

land and would tear down the house. Before she had any serious offer, Lulita broke her left arm and had to go to a nursing home for a few months, and from there to a retirement community. Within a year she died at the age of 84. One of her five Crawford cousins, Nancy Rosi, moved into the house, and many of the historical Crawford and Pritchett belongings are still there.



Lulita holds her Great Grandmother's quilt made in 1844

The Pritchett women were all artists. Lulie was an artist of the brush, painting canvases full of flowers and landscapes using oils or watercolors, decorating cards, or coloring black-and-white photographs. Margaret was an accomplished musician, playing in trios and quartets and playing first violin in the Denver Civic Symphony Orchestra. Lulita was an artist of words. She wrote over 1400 pages in over 70 published books, journals, magazines, and newspapers. She won numerous awards for contests sponsored by the *Denver Post*, the Denver Woman's Press club, and the Denver Extension of the University of Colorado. She was a member of the Denver Woman's Press club, the Denver University Writers' club, the National Writers' club, and the Colorado Author's League.

Lulita wrote throughout her life. Her poem "Little Brook" was printed in the Denver News when she was 9 years old, and her booklet "Memories of a Beloved Little Girl – Margarita Mexican", was printed just two years before she died. She went through four different phases in her career: (1) poetry through the 1920s when she was a student; (2) short stories, western romances, and juvenile fiction in the 1930s as she devoted full time to writing; (3) poems, western romances, and her premiere novel *Cabin at Medicine Springs* in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s when she had a full time office job; and (4) historical booklets and articles in her retirement years of the 1970s and 80s.

From 1915 through 1929 Lulita wrote over 100 poems in two notebooks. Many were written for birthdays, school events, or verse class. Only a handful were submitted to contests in magazines such as *St. Nicholas*, and only two were published. She then put her poetry aside, as she must have realized there was no money to be made from it. She would later return to writing a modest number of poems in the 1940s and 1950s.

In the 1930s, Lulita turned her attention to short stories, and became a full-time writer. In this decade she published 51 works of nature stories, western romances, and juvenile fiction including her first novel, *The Shining Mountains*. The western romances became her mainstay. Through 1951 she published 51 of them in pulp magazines of the time: *Rangeland Love Story*, *Romantic Range*, *Golden West*, *Western Love Story*, and most often, *Ranch Romances*. The stories took place during pioneer days in the old west, on the prairie during cattle drives, in mining camps or ranches, or in small towns reminiscent of Steamboat in the 1880's. They are all pure fiction, but include little tidbits of stories that she no doubt heard from her parents or uncles.

Take, for example, "Ballots to Pete's Hole". The plot involves delivering ballots to a remote ranch in the county; if the ballots don't make it, the heroine's father won't be elected. Lulita had heard stories of her Uncle Logan delivering ballots in 1886, 165 miles to Brown's Hole, and of how her grandfather had lost the 1888 election for State Representative when a ballot box did not get delivered in time to Hahns Peak. One striking feature of the stories is the number of characters named Red: her aunt and two uncles all had red hair. The characters and localities in the stories are different except for eight of the stories that are about a 14-year-old girl named Puck Randall and her pet elk. Lulita certainly had heard the stories from her mother and uncles about the pet deer and elk they had growing up.

Lulita partially broke away from the fiction short story mold when she wrote her historical fiction novel *The Shining Mountains*. She published it in 1939 with the help of Mary Pritchett, the wife of a cousin, who was an author's agent in New York City. This novel told the story of how the Crawford family left Missouri to find their dream in the mountains of Colorado, where they ended at the future site of Steamboat Springs. Lulita changed history a little in the book, making the ages of the three Crawford children 13, 11, and 10. www.LulitaCrawfordPritchett.com

and 3 rather than their real ages of 6, 4, and 6 months, and adding several fictional characters and subplots to go along with the historical facts. Possibly because she felt embarrassed at altering fact to make the fiction more enjoyable, she also changed the names of the children from Lulie, Logan, and John to Margie (Lulie's real middle name), Tom, and Dan (John's real middle name). Her Sept. 18, 1939 letter to her uncles reveals this embarrassment. At heart, she was really an historian, and she always felt uncomfortable about the tradeoffs an author must make to write good historical fiction. In 1959 she wrote an article in the journal *Author and Journalist* which discussed this author vs. historian dilemma.

Sept. 18, 1939

Dear Uncle Logan and Uncle John:

This book falls far short of what I'd intended it to be. I hope you won't be too much ashamed of it. Probably you will feel that I have needlessly garbled a good many facts and misrepresented some characters. There are so many things I ought to explain to you that I haven't the courage to begin and you'll just have to take the book for what it's worth.

Please overlook its faults as well as those of its author,

Your niece, Lulita (who has always very nearly worshiped her two uncles!)

Most of Lulita's works were published under her full name, Lulita Crawford Pritchett. At least three stories were by L. Crawford Pritchett, and a couple were by Lulita Pritchett. Curiously, she used the pen name "Perry Crawford" three times in 1932 - 1934. I do not know of any relatives or friends named Perry, and do not know her reason for using a pen name for those three stories.

In 1940 Lulita entered the next phase of her career when she started working full-time and writing less. She maintained a notebook where she recorded an entry every time she sent a manuscript off to a publisher, whether or not the publisher accepted it, and how much money she was given for the story. Some stories were submitted to as many as eight different magazines. She made approximately 33 entries from 1927 through 1929, 300 entries in the 1930s, 100 entries in the 1940s, 90 entries in the 1950s, none in the 1960s, and 20 in the 1970s. Lulita only wrote 11 stories published in *Ranch Romances* between 1943 and 1951, and about a dozen poems that either won prizes in the Press Club contests, or were published in national magazines such as *Saturday Evening Post* and *Good Housekeeping*. In the 1950s, she wrote a couple of journal articles and her most popular work, *The Cabin at Medicine Springs*, which received the Franklin Watts Juvenile Novel Award for 1958, worth \$3,500. In fact, this was her last work of fiction, and the *Author and Journalist* article in 1959 was her last published work for 15 years until she retired in 1974.

The Cabin at Medicine Springs takes up the story of the Crawford pioneer family during the summer of 1879 and focuses much of the attention on the events surrounding the Meeker Massacre. The novel went through two printings by Franklin Watts Inc. and one printing by the Steamboat Pilot, was printed in Great Britain, and serialized in a Colorado children's magazine. Lulita's sister Margaret was extremely proud of Lulita's accomplishment with the book, and wrote many letters to their cousin Jimmy detailing every step of the process from when Franklin Watts first informed Lulita of the prize through when the book was actually in print.

In retirement, Lulita began her career as a historian. In 1976 she published *Maggie By My Side*, which was her historically accurate version of the Crawfords' journey to Steamboat Springs that she first told in *The Shining Mountains*. Over the next ten years she recorded many more early pioneer stories of her ancestors in a dozen booklets and journal articles. The booklets were first written

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as Christmas presents for her five remaining Crawford cousins. With support and encouragement from the Tread of Pioneers Museum, she polished them up and published them for all to read.

One final aspect of Lulita's career was one of being a ghost writer. Within a year after her Uncle Logan died in 1947, she published two stories that he had told her, giving him full authorship even though the words are undoubtedly hers. In 1965, another Steamboat pioneer, Reuben Squire, contacted her to help him publish some of his stories of the pioneer days. He sent to her his hand-written drafts, which she would heavily rewrite. In 1980 she submitted the last of his stories to *The Western Horseman* after he had died.

Lulita did not earn a lot of money from her writings. A rough tally through 1960 shows she made \$9,827.02 for 56 stories, 10 articles, 7 poems, 16 prizes, and 2 novels. But in her life Lulita had a tremendous influence on the history of Steamboat, not because she created the history, as her mother and uncles and grandparents did when they founded the town, but because she wrote so eloquently and extensively on those early pioneering days.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF LULITA CRAWFORD PRITCHETT

Historical Novels

The Shining Mountains

1939 Albert Whitman & Co, Chicago [296 page hardbound]

2001 The Tread of Pioneers Museum [304 page softbound]

The Cabin at Medicine Springs

1958 Franklin Watts Inc, New York 1st printing Colorado Edition
[208 page hardbound]

1958 Franklin Watts Inc, New York 2nd printing

1959 The World's Work Ltd., Kingswood, Surrey, Great Britain

19?? Serialized in *Colorado* ???

1975 The Steamboat Pilot 2nd printing [208 page booklet]

2000 The Tread of Pioneers Museum [240 page softbound]

Historical Booklets

Maggie By My Side

1976 The Steamboat Pilot 1st printing [75 page booklet]

1983 Grand County Historical Association 2nd printing

Remember the Old Yampa and The Boy That Loved It So True - Logan Bourn Crawford

1983 The Tread of Pioneers Historical Commission [60 page booklet]

2005 The Tread of Pioneers Museum [60 page booklet]

John Daniel Crawford in the Great Good Old Days

1984 The Tread of Pioneers Historical Commission [66 page booklet]

Diary of Lulie Margie Crawford - A Little Girl's View of Life In The Old West 1880-1881

1985 The Tread of Pioneers Historical Commission [59 page booklet]

Gilpin Gold

1986 The Tread of Pioneers Historical Commission [60 page booklet]

Memories of a Beloved Little Girl - Margarita Mexican

1989 [no publisher, 28 page booklet]

Crawford Pioneer Tales

2005 The Tread of Pioneers Museum [42 page booklet]

Articles

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“Tilford Stillings, Pioneer Mail Carrier”, *The Colorado Magazine*, Volume 34, No. 4 (October, 1957), pp. 268-273.

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- “When the lawmakers protected the beaver”, *Denver Post Empire Magazine*, January 7, 1979, pp. 32-33.
- “James Harvey Crawford: 1845 - 1930 A dreamer of great dreams”, *Steamboat Pilot*, July 7, 1983, p.1D.
- ???, *Women’s Circle*, April 13, 1985.

Nature and Historical Fiction Stories

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- “Red Is For Courage”, *The Girls’ Companion*, June 7, 1930, pp. 1-2,7.
- “Adopting An Elk”, *Outdoor America*, August 1930, pp. 18-19.
- “His Thanksgiving”, unpublished manuscript.
- Perry Crawford, “Old Mother Bear and Cubs Defied by Cocky Spaniel”, *Denver Post*, May 22, 1932, Section 5, p. 1.
- Perry Crawford, “How Flickers Live Within Earth”, *Denver Post*, June 26, 1932, Magazine Section, p. 8.
- “Coyote Mother is Defended by Hunting Hound”, *Denver Post*, August 21, 1932, Magazine Section, p. 8.
- “Wolverine”, *Denver Post*, July 31, 1933
- Perry Crawford, “Pack Rats Have Clever Way to Escape Rattlers”, *Denver Post*, June 17, 1934, Magazine Section, p. 8.
- “Old Dune Coyote”, *Forward*, April 3, 1948, pp. 6-7, 13, 15.
- “High Country High Jinks”, *Denver Post*, 1948.
- “Riding Bear-back”, *Denver Post*, 1948 or 1949.

Articles for which Lulita was the Ghostwriter

- Logan B. Crawford, “Spring Comes to Trappers’ Lake”, *Nature Magazine*, Volume 41, No. 4 (April, 1948), pp. 181-183, 218. [Reprinted in *Steamboat Pilot*, May 13, 1948 and May 15, 1959.]
- Logan B. Crawford, “Nature on Holiday”, *Rocky Mountain Empire Magazine* (August 22, 1948).
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Juvenile Fiction Stories

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“Life Abundant”, *The Young Calvinist*, 1927.
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“Mountain Tidings”, *Young People’s Weekly*, August 20, 1939, pp. 3, 10.
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Western Romances

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“Ridin’ For Trouble”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd May 1931, pp. 242-251.
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“Luck for Two”, *Rangeland Love Story*, September 1931, pp. 376-389.
“Needed--A Man”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd September 1931, pp. 375-386.
“Love’s Road”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st November 1931, pp. 275-288.
“The Cussedest Cowboy”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st Jan 1932, pp. 283-292.
“Dream of Youth”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd February 1932, pp. 231-243.
“A Heap More Trouble”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd April 1932, pp. 238-248.
“The Boss of Bowan’s Hole”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st September 1932, pp. 573-588.
“Wolf Blood”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd December 1932, pp. 395-407.
“Sheriff’s Business”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd August 1933, pp. 538-552.
“Night Riders”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd September 1933, pp. 276-283.
“Sugar-Broke Bronc”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st January 1934, pp. 121-132.
“Love’s Nightmare”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st July 1934, pp. 117-128.
“Stubborn!”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd February 1935, pp. 271-280.
“Girlproof”, *Romantic Range*, June 1936, pp. 27-37.
“Joker”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st June 1936, pp. 357-366.
“Partic’lar Pest”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st July 1936, pp. 255-265.
“Love’s a Cinch”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd August 1936, pp. 91-98.
“Cowgirl’s Hunch”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st September 1936, pp. 247-254.
“Lariat Lady”, *Golden West*, February 1937, pp. 103-112.
“Drifter’s Dream”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd February 1937, pp. 97-108.

- “Canyon Girl”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st March 1937, pp. 59-68.
 “Accommodatin’ Cuss”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st April 1937, pp. 59-66.
 “Outlaw Hearts”, *Ranch Romances*, 3rd June 1937, pp. 90-98.
 “There’s Always Suckers”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd July 1937, pp. 92-104.
 “Gambler’s Girl”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st March 1938, pp. 74-84.
 “To the Sheriff”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd September 1938, pp. 87-97.
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 “Considerable of a Sinner”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd Mar 1939, pp. 98-107.



About 1910



About 1920



1930

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 “Devil Girl”, *Ranch Romances*, 3rd April 1940, pp. 53-62.
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 “Girl Tamer”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st August 1945, pp. 87-94.
 “Renegade Redhead”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd February 1947, pp. 74-81.
 “Nuthin’ Fancy”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st December 1947, pp. 83-91.
 “A Fool for Music”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd February 1948, pp. 81-89.
 “Law Abidin’”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd April 1948, pp. 79-87.
 “Ballots to Pete’s Hole”, *Ranch Romances*, 3rd October 1948, pp. 84-91.
 “Ridin’ Fool”, *Ranch Romances*, 2nd April 1949, pp. 76-83.
 “Nosy Kid”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st January 1950, pp. 65-70.
 “Doggone Dude”, *Ranch Romances*, 1st April 1951, pp. 72-78.
 “Fiddlin’ Gal”, *The Toronto Star Weekly*, July 10, 1954.
 “Come On Susie!”, unpublished manuscript, 1956.

Poems

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- “Dreams”, *Woman’s Home Companion*, September 1915.
- “Lasting Peace”, *American Poetry Magazine*, November 1927.
- “Mary Loved Lilacs”, *Good Housekeeping*, Volume 113 (July 1941), p.36 and *Between the Bookends* Volume V, ed. Ted Malone, 1942, p. 86.
- “Wind Walking”, *Saturday Evening Post*, Volume 221:38 p.150 (March 19, 1949).
- “Frost”, *Saturday Evening Post*, Volume 222:13 p. 94 (Sept. 24 1949)
- “Old Maid Angel”, *Good Housekeeping*, Volume 131 p. 42 (Sept. 1950).
- “Dusty Shoes”, *The Steamboat Pilot*, May 22, 1952, p.4..
- “Old Trail”, *Westways*, September 1952, p. 13.
- “City Shower”, *Extension*, April 1953, p. 50.
- “Evidence”, *Christian Advocate*, September 3, 1953, p. 31.



About 1940

1957

In 1980s

Writing Awards

[“Press Club” denotes the Denver Woman’s Press Club contests.]

1930 F. G. Bonfils Award for outstanding work in the creative writing classes of the U. of Colorado, 1st Place Short Story for “Pie for Mary”, \$25 (Bonfils was editor of the *Denver Post*).

1930 University Contest (Denver Extension of U. of Colorado) honorable mention for “Pie for Mary”.

1930 *Denver Post* fiction contest for writers under 25 years of age, honorable mention for “Pie for Mary”.

1932 *Denver Post* “Voices from the Wilds stories” contest, 3rd place for “Old Mother Bear and Cubs Defied By Cocky Spaniel”, \$2.

1932 *Denver Post*, 1st place for “Coyote Mother is Defended by Hunting Hound”, \$5.

1933 Press Club 1st place story for “Emily”, \$10.

1933 Press Club 2nd place essay for “Measuring”, \$5.

1936 Press Club 1st place poem for “Old Pitch Pine”, \$10.
1936 Press Club 2nd place for “Sagebrush & Cranberries”, \$5.
1937 Press Club honorable mention for “Red Pincushions”
1938 Press Club tie for 2nd place for “Timberline Trust”, \$2.50.
1939 Press Club tie for 1st place for “Fiddle for Springtime”, \$7.50.
1941 Press Club 1st place poem for “Mary Loved Lilacs”, \$10.
1942 Press Club 2nd place poem for “Pioneer Meeting”.
1942 Press Club 2nd place for “Beautiful Cow”.
1947 Press Club 1st place for “Weddin’ Clock”
1948 Press Club 1st place for “Old Dune Coyote”, \$10.
1948 Press Club 2nd place poem for “Song Above Timberline”, \$5.
1949 Press Club 1st place poem for “Frost”, \$10.
1950 Press Club honorable mention poem for “Evidence”.
1952 Press Club 1st place poem for “Old Trail”, \$10.
1952 Press Club honorable mention for “Monty and the Lion”
1953 Press Club 2nd place for “Fiddlin’ Gal”, \$5.
1956 Press Club 1st place for “Come on Susie”, \$10.
1957 Press Club 1st place poem for “Red Metale”, \$10.
1958 Press Club 1st place for “Bummer”, \$10.
1958 Franklin Watts Juvenile Novel Award for *The Cabin at Medicine Springs*, \$3,500.

REMEMBRANCES

By James L. Crawford:

I first met Lulita when I was 4 years old, and have no memory of it. The first time I remember was in 1975 when she was 69 and I was 26. My father, James D. Crawford (Jimmy to Lulita), died that summer in Billings, Montana after a bout of cancer. But even though he lived in Billings his last 21 years, his home was always Steamboat Springs, and that was where we buried him. I remember Lulita gathering her favorite Soda Spring water which she made into lemonade for us. Several days later my two sisters and I spent part of a day in Denver visiting with Lulita at her house on Federal Blvd, where she was born and had lived most of her life. It was like stepping back in time 50 years. The furniture, the copper bathtub, the kitchen, the wallpaper, the light fixtures, the animal heads, and more were just as they had been most of her life.



James, Nancy, Lulita, and Sharon

To my young eye, Lulita also looked ancient with her white hair and face wrinkles. But she was definitely in control of her life. She stood tall and straight and thin, with angular features, a big nose, and nothing to suggest an ounce of fat on her. She was a little stiff and formal, but then again she was living alone and had not seen any of us, her closest living relatives, in years.

I had “met” Lulita one other time, back in 1958. One day we received a package which my father excitedly opened to find a brand new book, *The Cabin at Medicine Springs*. He told us about his cousin, the author of the book, and we proceeded to read it and *The Shining Mountains* out loud, a few chapters each night. I got to learn all sorts of interesting things about my ancestors, and to dream about living in a nature wonderland.

I met Lulita in person two other times. In May of 1978 I spent a couple of days in Denver on my way from visiting my Mother in Billings back to my home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. (We

drove the record James H. Crawford deer head down to Steamboat to give to the Museum.) I visited Lulita at her home for an afternoon, and received another interesting tour. At one point, I was getting a little tired on my feet so I sat down on the nearest chair, a “sword chair”, which is like an arm chair but with two of the four sides of the chair open to allow a soldier wearing a sword to still be able to sit comfortably. Lulita came over and looked down on me very sternly, and said something to the effect that even though I was an honored guest in her house, that chair was not for anybody to sit in because it was a frail antique. Later, we looked over a box of old photographs I had brought with me. She identified those people she knew, and encouraged me to throw away the photos we didn’t know, saying that there was no point cluttering my life with meaningless things (knowing full well that all of the Crawford clan are packrats with plenty of meaningful things to keep).



Carr sitting on the sword chair.

The final time I met Lulita was in July, 1988, when my sisters and I visited her again in Denver. We had a snack with her, took some photos, and talked for a while before we had to leave. If only then I knew what I know now, I could have asked her all the questions that puzzle me about my ancestors: when was the stone house porch built? Where exactly were the onyx mine, the Sunset tunnel, the coal cabin, the Crawford cabins, the buffalo jump, Mary’s cabin, Elmer and Mary’s house, the Pritchett ranch house, etc.? If only....

By Nancy M. (Crawford) Rosi:

We knew the Pritchetts long before we actually remember meeting them because Dad always talked about his two Denver cousins. Margaret and Lulita were like older sisters to him, since he had none of his own.

My first memory of them was in the late 60's when I was travelling across country by bus. I visited Margaret and Lulita for a couple of hours. In the late 80's my family had a reunion in Steamboat Springs. We visited Lulita for two or three hours before heading to Steamboat, trying to persuade her to come with us. But by then she had asthma problems and didn't like leaving home.

The few hours in her house gave me a glimpse into the Crawford past. On the walls were Lulie's paintings. On the mantle were pictures of the older generations. The beds were filled with piles of papers, photos, books that Lulita was sorting, and over all, I was walking backward in time! I had seen enough to know that this place was a valuable source of our history.

After Lulita passed away in 1991 I knew I needed to come to Denver and gather the photos and papers up before the house was sold. But when my husband Bob and I walked in the front door, I realized that it wasn't just the pictures and papers I needed to keep, it was the whole house. And that is what happened.

So, acquiring Lulita's house was a good news, bad news thing. Good news: it was an old *Victorian house*; bad news: it was an *old* Victorian house. Good news: the book shelves were filled with wonderful old literary classics and history books; bad news: there was no room for our books. Good news: the dresser drawers were filled with old style underwear, jewelry, clothing, scarves, etc.; bad news: we needed places for our things. Well you get the picture. We wanted to preserve the old period feeling of the home but needed to move things around.

Lulita's personality was reflected everywhere. The file cabinet showed her organization skills as well as her love of nature and history. Her sewing room showed her thriftiness by sewing all her clothes rather than buying them. Each trunk had keepsakes from time past: Margaret's school things and violin music and tatting, Lulita's Denver U. and Parks U. mementos, Grandma Crawford's knitted pillows, woven coverlets and handmade pin cushions, Carr's mining instruments and books, notebooks and pictures. And

boxes of papers that were the beginnings of her books and booklets.

Lulita had spent many hours in her last years writing down the old stories and keeping the Crawford history in the best way she could. Lulita was a country girl in a city setting. Luckily her mother had had the foresight to buy the two lots on either side of her house. So there was space to plant rose bushes, have a nice size garden and have rhubarb, lilacs and an apple tree. Her poems and stories always had Nature as a big part.

Her family was important and conveying the stories to us, her younger cousins became the impetus for the booklets she wrote in the 80s.

She has given me the opportunity to personally catch glimpses of the past through all of her treasures, collected over many years. Lulita was a shy and private person but communicated with the rest of us through her poems and stories. We are blessed to have all her works for us to read.

Happy Birthday, Lulita!

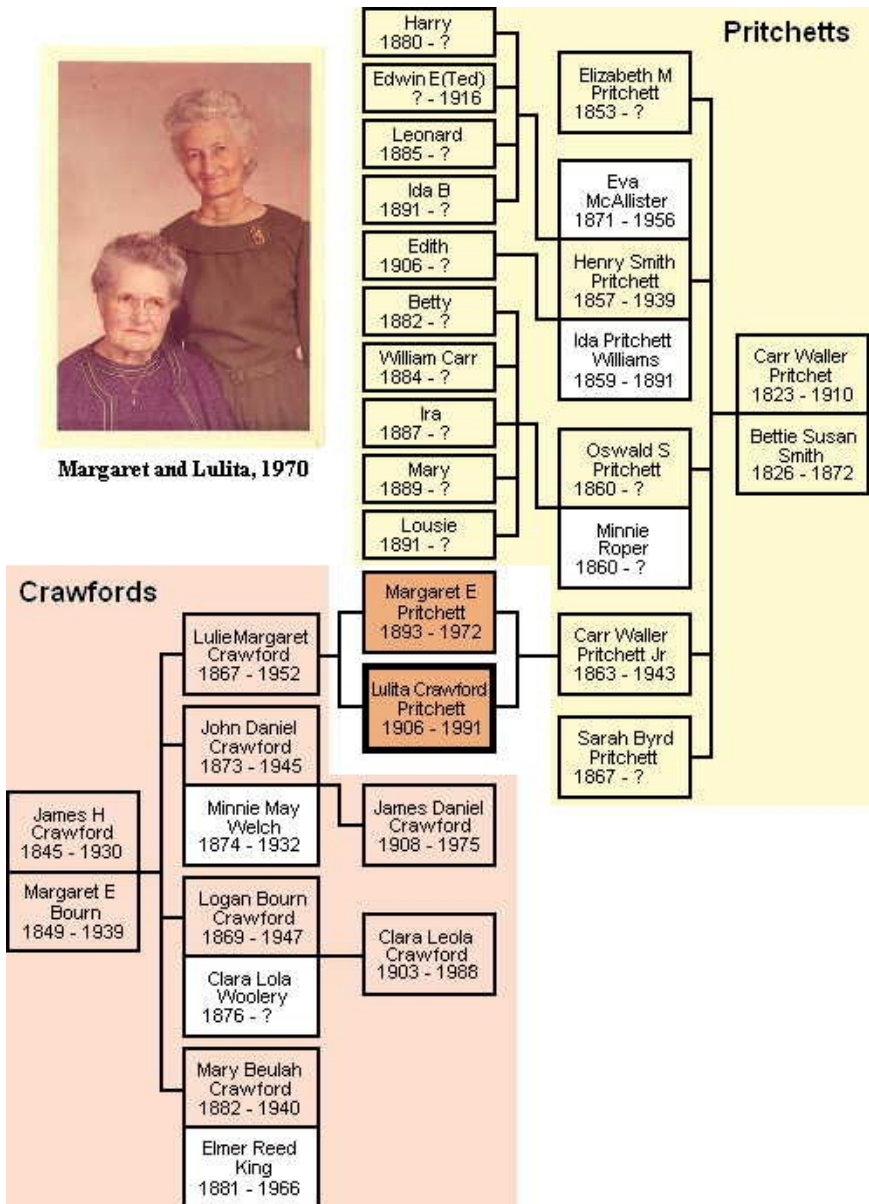


Margaret, Jimmy, Leola, Grandma, Grandpa, Lulita

LULITA CRAWFORD PRITCHETT FAMILY TREE



Margaret and Lulita, 1970





Lulita Crawford Pritchett in front of her home in Denver, May 1978