

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NARRATIVE IN THE WRITING  
OF ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

by

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## ABSTRACT

Narrative, in its original sense, orders the world vision of an individual or a people in the form of a story to be told or sung. The object is to make the listeners know of events, not only within the confines of cause and effect, but also on levels of social, philosophical and cosmological realism that may operate independently of conventional time and space. Isabella Valancy Crawford used narrative as the most consistent organizational principle of her work. She always tells a story, and her stories always include a transcendental element, usually called "love", and a dialectic, here described as "reason", which interact to move the dramatic action forward.

Crawford's early short stories present the cosmological substructure which appears in her later works. Both magical action and physical work ensure the progress of civilised order, a theme most notably repeated in a Canadian context in "Malcolm's Katie". To understand the origins of Crawford's optimistic vision, it is necessary to examine the economic, social and cultural circumstances in which she lived. Only thus can one make sense of the conflicts expressed in her work between Christianity and paganism, tradition and innovation, admiration of high society and anger at its wealth.

Crawford occupies a distinguished place in Canadian literature on the basis of the availability of only a small part of her entire extant opus. This study examines her earliest known works because they are enjoyable in themselves and because of their importance as guides to the narrative principles underlying mature poems, such as "Gisli", "the Chieftain" and "Malcolm's Katie", and a late short story, "In the Breast of a Maple", all discussed in depth. Texts of her previously unpublished stories are reproduced in the Appendices. This thesis is only one step in the large "work in progress" which must be done toward the publication of the complete works of Crawford and critical assessment of her work. Only after further studies in these and other directions can one determine Crawford's position in the canon of Canadian literature written by women.

for Valancy

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## INTRODUCTION

Isabella Valancy Crawford occupies a place in Canadian literature rather off to one side of the mainstream. She does not fit neatly with the Confederation poets, nor with the Victorian "lady" writers. She wrote narrative poems containing lyrics of unique strength and color, and produced long novels with exotic settings and happy romantic endings, but she appears to have worked alone outside of any literary circle. She lived in Toronto for eleven years, from 1876 to 1887, with no known source of income other than her writings. She resided with an aging mother, who seems to have been a writer too, perhaps through the influence of her only surviving daughter. Crawford is a writer who cannot be easily placed in a tradition either literary or social.

The entire opus of Isabella Valancy Crawford cannot be assessed because it is still largely unpublished. While she lived, some of her poems and short stories appeared in newspapers and small magazines. She edited and published a book of her poetry in 1884, which received excellent reviews and sold only fifty copies. Some fifteen years after her death, John W. Garvin was appointed literary executor by her brother, Stephen Walter Crawford. From her manuscripts, and from searching Toronto newspapers, he produced a larger volume of poetry entitled The Collected Poems of Isabella Valancy Crawford.<sup>1</sup> In reality, this volume represents only a selection of her works and the title of the book should have reflected this fact. Letters to Garvin from the effusive Ethelwyn Wetherald, who provided the introduction to the 1905 edition, show there had been some discussion of the matter among her,



Garvin and E.S. Caswell, an editor with Williams Briggs' Methodist Book and Publishing House, who published the 1905 edition. Caswell supported the "selected" title but Garvin and Wetherald had their way. On October 19, 1904, citing the works of Tennyson and Wordsworth, Wetherald wrote to Garvin,

I was sure you would be opposed to "Selected Poems" as I was. As a matter of fact they ought to be called complete and ought to be selected. That need not deceive anyone for it would simply mean her best work complete. The weak links in the chain are what the critics who are bound to jibe will jibe at.<sup>2</sup>

Various lyrics, such as "The Dark Stag" and "The South Wind laid his moccasins aside. . ." were lifted from their narrative contexts and published piecemeal in anthologies throughout the years from Crawford's death to the present time. Until the publication in 1973 of parts of a manuscript, entitled by its editor, Dorothy Livesay, "The Hunters Twain"<sup>3</sup>, none of the vast quantity of Crawford material extant in the Lorne Pierce Collection has been made available to the general public. This incomplete narrative, equal in dramatic and lyrical impact to "Malcolm's Katie", represents a major contribution to the accessible Crawford canon. Another short story, "Extradited", edited by Penny Petrone, also appeared in 1973 in the Journal of Canadian Fiction<sup>4</sup>. But examination of the Lorne Pierce Collection show thousands of pages of full length novels, one, a projected tetralogy. It seems that critics of Crawford have dealt merely with the tip of the iceberg, and the basic task of discovering what this major Canadian writer actually wrote is still untried.

The history of the Crawford biography reads similarly. After the

obituary notices in 1887, and short accounts recounting early sketches upon the publication of Garvin's 1905 edition, only Katherine Hale's book for the "Makers of Canadian Literature" series in 1923 provided any coherent account of Crawford's somewhat mysterious life.<sup>5</sup> An article of Garvin's, published posthumously in Canadian Who was Who in 1937, contradicted many of his earlier accounts of her life including that in the introduction to the 1905 edition. Again, only in the 1970s has anyone published any new information about Crawford. Mary F. Martin, in her 1972 article, "The Short Life of Isabella Valancy Crawford" has produced the definitive biography to date, an outline which delineates her extensive research and the still more extensive problems still to be solved.

Within this thesis, I project some of the editorial and critical tasks to be performed. First, a concrete task I will undertake is the analysis of some of Crawford's earliest works, her fairy stories. They illustrate in the unsophisticated way of an inexperienced writer some of the basic influences of her environmental and cultural life upon her imagination, and show the direction to a critical appreciation of her more mature works. Reproductions of the manuscript versions of two of the tales from Appendices A and B. Secondly, Crawford's work must be set against the background of her life in nineteenth century Canada, in the thriving mill-town of Peterborough and the industrial hub of Toronto. The primary work of finding out who the writer was, what she wrote and why she wrote what she did, must be commenced before any appraisal of her intrinsic talent or place in Canadian literature can be made. One must look at the capacities of the writer and her place in her historical setting before one can assess her as possessing either a genuine "mythopoeic imagination"<sup>7</sup> or a "political

conscience"<sup>8</sup> with any authority more than intuition or critical bias.

Thirdly, I will examine some of her best known poems, "Gisli, the Chieftain" and "Malcolm's Katie" in the light of the juvenilia, and her social and literary background. This thesis will not be a study of Crawford's complete work; instead, I have chosen works representative of different styles from what appear to be different periods of her life.

A short poem entitled "Love and Reason", points to one of the central thematic preoccupations in Crawford's poetry that will be examined throughout this thesis. The poem delineates the necessity for the balance of these two forces in the perfect landscape, person or civilisation. They are not opposites, but complements. Both principles operate in all of her works, but they assume different forms and functions as the occasion demands. "Love" may be romance, magic, imagination or the irreversible power of the universe to develop in goodness and order. It is the essence of Crawford's transcendental vision. "Reason" consists of basic forces in dialectical relation; sometimes the natural and the supernatural, sometimes the New World value of work toward the future and the Old World value of satisfaction with the past.

In the poem "Love and Reason", the calm maiden Reason is ordered by Jove to:

"Take Love and bear him in thy breast;  
With thy sage counsel him restrain,  
And so with Love let Reason reign!"

Love introduces experience of change and accident into the maiden Reason's innocent garden; she provides raw materials and restraints. In the works

studied in Chapter I, Crawford's juvenilia, love assumes the form of magical transformation, while reason consists of the interplay between the natural and supernatural worlds. In the second chapter, a discussion of Crawford's life and influences, love is the optimism that allows the poet to transcend her poverty; reason, the raw materials of her social and cultural life, which she orders in her topical poetry and prose works. The third chapter treats the most mature developments of Crawford's metaphysics, explicitly in such poems as "Gisli, the Chieftain" and "Malcolm's Katie". In "Malcolm's Katie" and in the unpublished story, "In the Breast of a Maple", love is the process of goodness in the universe that will blend the components of the dialectic of reason, the actions of loving and physical work, and the culture of the past. "Love" will cause the commencement of a new kind of Canadian civilisation, one that integrates the cultivation of the old with the vibrancy of the new.

I have titled this thesis "The Development of Narrative in the Writing of Isabella Valancy Crawford", for one of the distinguishing features of Crawford's work is her way of telling a story. "Malcolm's Katie", Crawford's major poem, is frequently faulted for having a contrived, melodramatic plot, full of accidents and fortunate coincidences; but to measure the poem so linearly is to miss its genuine power. Crawford clearly did not conceive of narrative as a stringing together of events in a plausible sequence; rather, narrative was a way of ordering her world vision, a way of understanding and explaining relationships in the universe that transcend the realistic contingencies of time and place. The reordering of the world in narrative form can be seen in the early fairy stories and carries on through into the major poems. That world view which is given

expression in major poems like "Malcolm's Katie" and "Gisli, the Chieftain" is shaped by the social and cultural forces operating on the poet herself as she grew up and struggled to establish herself as a writer. Narrative in Isabella Crawford's work implies a cosmology, a vision of cosmic order and human understanding. Narrative in this larger sense is the subject of the thesis.

## CHAPTER I

## i

The study of the earliest extant works of a writer provides vital information on the way the writer's imagination combines with the environmental influences upon her, and suggests the growing vision of the cosmological orders which she will incorporate into her mature works. Here metaphysical propositions are presented with the brashness of youth; basic organizational frameworks are integrated less subtly than in later poems or novels. Equally important, early works suggest the methodology needed to approach the works of the mature artist.

Crawford's fairy stories, the products of a particularly creative pre-adolescent (or adolescent), show the unified world view arising from the interplay between the forms of her imagination and the forms of her environment. From a child's drawing we can see vivid images of a world in flux that may be interpreted by adult eyes as symbolic: "And why have you drawn your Daddy so big in this picture?"; while the child, less set in her notions of spatial relationships, may be drawing what is for her an absolutely realistic portrait of her father, who does happen to be very large at that particular moment.

It seems possible that young persons create a world in order to discover themselves. Child psychologists Edith Cobb,<sup>1</sup> Rhoda Kellogg<sup>2</sup> and Philip Aries<sup>3</sup> provide modern scientific basis for this approach to Crawford, who seems to have had more interest in the outside world than in her own

psyche. Crawford attempts to order poetically her environment and her fantasy world. Early biographer Maud Miller Wilson refers to this "halcyon time" in her biographical sketch, published in The Globe Magazine, Toronto, 1905 and possessed in typescript by the Lorne Pierce Collection. The young Crawford is imagined as she might have lived on the banks of the Saugeen River near Lakefield:

There in the early morning did the young girl paddle her canoe through the lily beds and witness the islands shaking off their misty coverings, stand revealed (sic), green and sparkling as though fresh from the hand of God. There she has seen Mount Julian dimly defined at first rise out of his foggy wrappings and resume his sentinal watch over all Stoney Lake . . . <sup>4</sup>

The fairy tales, which I consider to be Crawford's earliest extant writings, illustrate concepts and poetic techniques important to the understanding of her later works. I have chosen for study "The Rival Roses", "How the Nightingale and the Parrot wooed the Rose", "The Rose and the Rainbow", "The Waterlily" and "Wava, the Fairy of the Shell". "The Waterlily" and "Wava, the Fairy of the Shell" are reproduced in their entirety in Appendices A and B. All are written in a tidy school-girl script; the external evidence of her signature "Isabella Valancy Crawford, North Douro" suggests their composition prior to the move to Peterborough in 1871. Although none bears a specific date, their content strongly suggests their composition in pre-adolescent or early teenage years. The copies here are polished and probably intended for presentation or publication.

The content of these stories suggests they are among the earliest of her extant works. Her world here is largely imaginary, concerned entirely

with fairies and landscapes, largely uncomplicated by human characters. Later, she incorporates humans into her narratives, at first, stereotypic flightly lovers, as in "Aunt Dorry's Potpourri", and still later, quite serious lovers, like Max and Katie, Ion and the "falcon woman" of "Hunters Twain".

These stories present nature and the magical "fays" as ecological interdependents in the causation of events. (I use the term "ecological" in its older sense of the order of the house (*οικος*); the house here being the total amalgam of Crawford's conscious and unconscious experience.) As a young person, her conscious experience strongly involves the country environment of Paisley, and then the Kawartha Lake district of Ontario. Later it grows to include her life in the small town of Peterborough and the city of Toronto. Her unconscious experiences remain similar throughout her creative life - this is why the study of the early works becomes important to an understanding of her later narratives.

In most of Crawford's work currently in print (and I remind the reader that the bulk of her work is still unpublished), the vision of the interdependence of landscape and character provides the basis for narration. The most important contribution of the early works to an understanding of the mature Crawford canon is the easily perceptible structure which points the direction to an understanding that narrative is as crucial an element in "Malcolm's Katie" or the "Hunters Twain" manuscript as the descriptive or lyrical passages. Her early writings are the product of her entire passionate involvement with both the natural and the supernatural in her environment, a period of her life where the concurrent reality of the



erratic life of an alcoholic doctor's daughter had not begun to influence her work. In these early stories, Crawford is still being informed of the world, not yet becoming a world-former, as she will in her move to Toronto, and serious creation of characters. Very early too, she shows the "heraldic" fields of imagery used to move ahead the narrative, and that peculiar Crawford tendency to organize material in its relation to space more prominently than in its relation to time. In these early works she shows a universe where the dialectic of the forces of magic and physical action converge to insure the continuum of life - her definition of "love". Crawford's mature concept of the fifth dimension, the union of time and space, complicates the study of her works. The setting is always as alive as the characters; narrative consists, in its purest sense, of letting the reader know of events and their causes. Crawford herself acts upon her environment, as its receptor and observer, and its bearer to her audience. She also is the genius loci, both in the sense of the spirit of a locale informing the imagination; and in the sense of those creative persons whom we call "geniuses", who are capable of transmitting the essence of a particular locale<sup>5</sup>.

In Crawford's short story "The Rose and the Rainbow", the rose, who is fixed in her place on the bush inquires of the swallow, the butterfly, the bee and the owl the nature of the world at the end of the rainbow. Each describes what he or she would like to find. In answer to her question, the rose receives some knowledge, somewhat different than that she sought. She learns, "Everyone sees with his own heart and wishes, and is all the world to himself."<sup>6</sup> This psychological insight on the part of one of Crawford's non-human personalities foreshadows the kind of character she

will create at the height of her powers. Characters like Max and Katie will operate within their own mythological contexts, each performing different duties in building the homestead. Paradoxically, it is through their interaction that worlds meet, change, and create new worlds.

## ii

"The Waterlily", an early fairy story, is unique as the only Crawford piece which exists in two manuscript copies. The earlier version is signed on the back of the last page "Isabella Valancy Crawford, North Douro." The later version seems copied from the first in a much neater hand, with minor changes and division into chapters. At the time I worked with the manuscripts I did not realize the importance of Crawford's early work, so I did not study the nature of her revisions. The later copy, reproduced here as Appendix B is used for all quotations<sup>7</sup>.

The problem of the story is very simple. The peace and revelry of the fairy garden paradise has been marred by the abduction of Roseblush by the gnome Crystal-coat, a waterbeetle. Goldenball, the fairy hero, volunteers to find her. In the course of his search, a naiad tells him the fairy princess's return can only be effected through the agency of a child. Meanwhile, in another garden, Maggie, the opportune child, and her friend, Tommy, spy a large perfect waterlily which Maggie avidly desires to bring home. Goldenball transforms himself into a human and invents a boat to convey Maggie to the waterlily, where Roseblush is imprisoned. With Maggie's help, Goldenball releases Roseblush. Both children are bountifully rewarded. The lily is transformed to pure gold, and all the

fish Tommy will ever catch "shall have eyes of pearl and scales of gold." Of course, Maggie and Tommy eventually marry and live quite happily with Maggie's mother, Dame Tidy, a widow.

In "The Waterlily", Crawford presents two completely different worlds, each with its own garden setting. Both are light worlds, without serious villains. The waterlily acts as a focal point for the two and at the climax of the story is the point in time, and more important, space, where these two worlds telescope. The fairies of one world and the children of the other are interdependent upon each other's power to acquire what each wants. The naiads, another order of being, act in a necessary but more detached capacity, as they interpret the two worlds and tell Goldenball how to solve his dilemma.

In the tale, "The Waterlily", Crawford constructs the fairy garden first. It is arranged beneath a "great old oak", an element associated with the magic of the traditional English fairy tales. The fairy queen and king, Titania and Oberon, sit on thrones of gold "mounted on a kind of dais formed of a white mushroom, covered with scarlet velvet richly embroidered with exceedingly minute pearls." This poetic but precise description of the amanita muscaria mushroom introduces another magic attribute to the fairy kingdom. This is the hallucinogenic mushroom, considered by some to be the original soma of the Vedas, most certainly a powerful psychotropic agent, a link between landscape and extra-terrestrial levels of reality. The properties of this mushroom were known both to the native people and settlers of Ontario, who commonly used it as fly-bane.

Catharine Parr Traill, in The Backwoods of Canada makes a remark about a kind of fern she calls the "fairy fern" that may have proved a direct challenge to Crawford:

Could we but imagine Canada to have been the scene of fairy revels we should declare that these graceful ferns were well-suited to shade the elfin court of Oberon and Titania.<sup>8</sup>

Crawford's fairies are depicted as winged, and usually engaged in musical revelry. They revere their monarchs for their wisdom and dignity. Titania and Oberon rule in the interest of peace; they act as arbiters in the discussions of the entire fairy circle, rather than as law-givers. Despite the foul act of their enemies, the water-beetles, in abducting Roseblush, Goldenball suggests that the simple rescue of the princess is more important than the vengeance of war with the water-beetles, whom the fairies could easily vanquish.

Chapter II introduces an entirely different garden, filled with traditional Ontario mid-summer flowers: stock, heart's-ease, lily-of-the-valley and thick ivy filled with bird nests. In contrast to the fairy garden by the oak, this garden is situated on the bank of a stream. Crawford quickly equates her primary human character, Margaret (Maggie), the child, to the garden, "a little girl named Margaret, a pretty creature, like the flowers in the garden for beauty and sweetness, and with a voice like the birds who sang among the ivy, for melody." Maggie, and her friend Tommy go to the stream to fish for trout, the same sly trout characterized as "tricky" in the "Hunters Twain" poem. Here we find a descriptive passage where the imagery of the sunset carries forward the action of the narrative:

Save where the little stream which had guided them to it stole murmuringly away, the lake which was nearly circular in form presented unbroken banks of a delicate green to the gaze, and from their verdant heights graceful willows leant over the clear water, their long leaves floating on its limpid and unruffled surface, and forming a deep margin of shade round the basin. Outside this dark circle, like a ruby in a sombre ebony setting the lake glowed with a vivid rose tint, deepened in spots into a brilliant crimson, the reflection from the western sky, bright with the rays of the setting sun, which however became paler every moment. A large and magnificent star suddenly appeared, floating as it were on the bosom of the lake, and the rose-tints melted into a silvery and tender radiance, illuminating the scene with a strangely beautiful effect.

.....

As the mild moonlight replaced the dazzling glow of sunset, Margaret pointed out to her companion a large white waterlily which had before escaped their dazzled sight. . .

Although Catharine Parr Traill looked upon the Canadian bush from a considerably more scientific perspective than Crawford, she provides a description of the lily and the lake Crawford has seen in the Lakefield area. In her letters home to England, first published in 1836, Traill describes a lily she names

The "Queen of the Lakes", for she sits a crown upon the waters. This magnificent flower is about the size of a large dahlia; it is double to the heart of the flower; every row of petals diminishing by degrees in size, and gradually deepening in tint from the purest white to the brightest lemon colour. . .the leaves are also worthy of attention: at first they are of a fine dark green, but as the flower decays the leaf changes its hue to a vivid crimson. Where a large bed of these lilies grow closely together, they give quite a sanguine appearance to the waters...<sup>9</sup>

While Crawford can be rightfully accused of trying to paint too much detail into the picture, the description prefigures the power of

landscape in her work, and gives some indication of the process of her poetic technique, which will lead to the more economical and more effective description of the same crucial time of day, as in "Malcolm's Katie" and the unforgettable lyric "The Lily Bed" from the "Hunters Twain" narrative.

The children at this point in the story are transfixed by the strange radiance of the waterlily and by a strain of melody "sweeter than mortal music", which emanates from it. However, a human reaction of fear of the strangeness intrudes and the children run for home.

Chapter III describes the trials of Goldenball in locating the abducted Roseblush. Unlike many heroes, Goldenball does not have to endure extreme hardship in his quests. He can take time to curl up to sleep in a nutshell. He has the magical attributes of invisibility during the daylight, when he can eavesdrop on the gossip of the water-beetles. The intuition leads him to the singing naiad of the stream, who asks the voices of all the streams to tell the secret of the place of Roseblush's imprisonment. They answer:

On the lake the lily lies  
 Glimmering in the silver ray,  
 In its bosom pearly-white  
 Sad and tearful dwells the fay!

Sprite, nor fay, nor elfin band  
 E'er can break the potent spell  
 Yet an earthborn child has power  
 This is all that we may tell.

Goldenball finds Roseblush, commiserates with her, and refreshes himself with a nap inside a flame-colored lobelia. The fairy overhears

Maggie's desire to possess the waterlily and Tommy's difficulties in requiring a boat to reach it. Crawford has set her stage.

On the final evening of all the evenings in which the action of the story takes place, Goldenball transforms himself into a very opulently dressed gentleman, of human proportions. He produces "a boat which (shines) like silver". The three row out to the perfect, radiant waterlily. When Tommy reaches out to grasp it, the stranger says, "No, it is Maggie's. She alone must touch it". This affirms the androgyny of the two powerful forces, so evident throughout the story. The fairy queen Titania makes the final decision on Goldenball's journey; the female naiad has shown the way to the waterlily, now only the girl has the power to liberate Roseblush. The embodiments of the female principle possess the power of magic; but it is the male character who initiate physical actions that can change the world-order. Crystal-coat has kidnapped the fairy; Goldenball works at her rescue; ultimately Tommy steps on the nasty water-beetle who bites Maggie's wrist. While showing the unity of the supernatural and earthly spheres, Crawford shows the interdependence of the principles of magical and physical power.

The essence of the interaction between imagery and narration can be summarized in the word "transformation". At the end of the tale, we find "the boat had vanished, and when the children went to look for it they only found an empty walnut shell floating on the lake". What was the nature of the transformation which occurred, or was it an illusion? Crawford suggests that three types of transformation took place, all on a plane that unifies the fairy and the human world. Goldenball, the fairy

transforms to a human, Maggie is transformed into an agent of the fairy world, and finally, the evanescent lily transforms into the permanence of gold and diamonds. The magic of the shift of light and season over Crawford's landscapes, at once illusory and real, ties together the landscape, the locus, with the image and the story line.

An article, reviewing a talk by John W. Garvin on Isabella Valancy Crawford, shows Garvin praising her poetry as possessing "the incommunicable line".<sup>10</sup> The reviewer makes no attempt to elucidate Mr. Garvin's intent, except to note that Garvin read examples of "the incommunicable line." If made in reference to Crawford's narrative line rather than her imagery, perhaps the label is not so fatuous as it first appears.

The story "The Waterlily" proposes the same sort of imagery and the same sort of narrative principle as Crawford uses in her later poetic work. There are the two gardens, each discussed in detail, and the same eclipse of time and space that brings together two orders of such diverse physical properties. The underlying principle is very clearly and definably magic; not coincidence or authorial contrivance. The same principle operates in the Crawford poetic narratives, where time and space eclipse to put Max at hand to save Katie and Alfred from the river; where the arrows of Gisli and Brunhilde meet in the breast of the eagle.

In the early work as in the later, the growing Crawford vision of the underlying principles of the cosmos becomes obvious. As she matured, her organizational sub-text became submerged in the dynamic flow of her



narrative. I propose that this fairy story, although written in prose, demonstrates the basis of the Crawford narrative, as well as providing a definition of the nature of "narrative" itself.

## iii

"Wava, the fairy of the Shell", also in manuscript in the Lorne Pierce Collection,<sup>11</sup> presents a fairy world at one with nature, as does "The Waterlily". Although there is no concrete way of determining which piece preceded the other, I suggest "Wava" to be of later composition. The story does not abound with lengthy descriptions of flora and seasonal changes, although Crawford has scope to indulge herself in the tropical island setting she had selected. Instead, the relationship of the principles of action she finds in her world order are clearly defined, and the child introduced into the story maintains only the memory of fairyland after she is returned to the conventional world. As well as making a statement on the place of fantasy in childhood life, Crawford presents a glimpse of a dark principle, quite absent in "The Waterlily".

The story evolves very directly. The island paradise of the fairies and mermaids, ruled by Wava, accepts a human child from a shipwreck into its midst. Although all do their utmost to integrate her into their world, Goldie, the child, never ceases to yearn for reunion with her mother. Through the agency of the mermaids, who opportunely save her from the shark, and the birds who carry a message to her mother, Goldie sails away to resume her rôle in her proper human sphere.

Crawford's setting here typifies her eclectic use of the natural and the supernatural, the scientific and the impossible. The landscape is as profuse as a Victorian parlour. The climate is warm and the foliage dense, with a central jessamine tree dominating palms, waterfalls and dancing insects. As in all Crawford landscapes, the scene is personified and constantly moving. It leaps out of her imagination rather than waiting to be scanned by the photographic eye:

. . . blossoms tangled in wild and rich confusion--flung up their brilliant cups to the sun, as though to catch the golden liquid beams in their painted chalices. A cascade of sparkling water flung itself in a glittering arch over a miniature precipice . . .

Fairies nurture the world and mermaids protect it. The fairies seem insect-like but have more power than the average bird or bee. Fairies carry on the process of nature, carrying "acorns filled with dew, with which to replenish their charges after the heat of the day". The fish and birds are under their care; they help "the gaudy butterflies to repaint their wings tarnished by the excessive damp". They also supervise the "coral-insects" who build the island, a point upon which Crawford is not quite scientifically accurate. Wava, their queen, sails in a nautilus-shell and lives in a conch. Crawford says, "Wava had her troubles and duties and pleasures just like mortals".

While the fairies hold the landscape within its order, which is change, the mermaids sing their "sweet, wild songs" offshore. Akin in nature and dramatic function to the naiads of "The Waterlily", they range further afield, and assume the classic duties of warning of storms and

carrying messages. The earth-spirits and the water-spirits act inter-dependently

Now the fays and the mermaids were very excellent friends, for the former would carry to them blushing roses and other fragrant flowers to deck their ringlets with, and in return the mermaids would bring them pearls from the deep places of the sea, with which Wava and her fays loved to ornament their mantles. When a storm was coming, the mermaids would chant wild songs to warn the fays of its approach, so that they might take refuge from its fury, for which kindness they felt very grateful indeed. . . .

The mermaids form the active magical principle as the fairies do the passive, and it is important to note that both are entirely female. Crawford gives them three songs in the story, the first a storm-warning of the introduction of a dark principle, sung while "tossing their long white arms up to the sky:"

Haste, haste away, each airy fay,  
To rest in shell or flower,  
For in the skies the sunbeam dies,  
And sombre shadows lower.  
Quick, quick, begone! The wild winds moan,  
The angry billows chiding.  
On each wave's breast and snowy crest,  
The storm is onward riding.

The coming of the storm, fearsome for the fairies but enjoyable for the mermaids, sounds the rising of the shark, the lonely misfit in the idyllic landscape. The storm assumes the shapes of creatures alien to this world of the small and orderly. The clouds descend

Like great ragged heaps of snowy wool,  
 and others in shapes of black lions, terrific  
 griffins, and soaring eagles. The sea was  
 ruffling into little spiral columns of foam,  
 through which the white storm-birds darted,  
 chasing each other hither and thither, and  
 at some distance the yellow-white sides of  
 master shark might be seen cleaving the waters  
 as he darted through it on the watch for prey.

As can be seen from the discussion of Alfred's rôle in "Malcolm's Katie", Crawford's dark principle is not equal in power to the basically "good" organizing principles of the universe, although it is a necessary adjunct to them. The civilization of the shark and his correspondent milieu remains primitive, more chaotic than the ordered island. The force which might destroy an ordered world only slightly impedes its progression, as the battle with the shark only temporarily slows down the central thrust of the narrative action. This imbalance of power between good and evil is present in all of Crawford's examined works.

One interpretation of Crawford's metaphysics finds "good and evil are necessary forces working toward the reconstruction of eternity".<sup>12</sup> Although this theory correctly interprets four stanzas of "Gisli, the Chieftain", it fails as a general guide to Crawford's philosophy. Indeed, one of the central points about Crawford's metaphysics is its lack of continuity in image and symbol; her poetic consistency lies in her cosmology, which develops poetically through her use of narrative. Her universe is basically good and not split into two distinct and opposing principles. Different visions of order amend each other, and do not remain eternally fixed in their goodness or evil.

Love, which Yeoman sees as "the transcendent power over darkness"<sup>13</sup> is, rather, the transforming force in the universe, that catalyzes the dialectic action between the many principles which comprise the world, and points their direction toward constant advancement. This can be shown in an analysis of "Gisli, the Chieftain", "Malcolm's Katie", and even, provides the framework for the "Hope" versus "Despair" debate in "The Hunters Twain" manuscript.

Crawford is an eternal optimist, and the dialectic of forces in her work is usually between the force of magical action and the force of physical action, each informing the other and necessary to the other. Evil is peripheral to this world, sometimes a hindrance, but never a dark force to be challenged and overcome. In "Malcolm's Katie" Alfred's vision is necessary to the growth of the new order and must be incorporated into the vision of Max and Katie. This interpretation of Crawford's dialectic leads to an understanding of her work, both on the mythic level and on the personal level. It shows the roots of her optimism about the growing civilization of Canadian society and the basis of such lines as "She moves to meet the centuries . . .", said of the burgeoning metropolis of Toronto.

Crawford gives us a glimpse of a dark principle in "Wava". It is not so clearly defined as the "voice of Evil" in "Gisli".<sup>14</sup> Only to the fish is the shark threatening. To the fairies and mermaids, he is an adversary to be teased. Both have games at his expense. The shark is unable to do more than annoy in the world where the fairies shoot thorns into his mouth or transform themselves into fishes who metamorphose back into fairies who can swim out from between his teeth.

The second song of the mermaids represents their first heroic act on behalf of the child, who enters the universe accustomed to maintaining itself in perfect balance and harmony. Wava leads the fays in answering the mermaid's challenge:

Come hither, hither, gentle fays,  
 Come tripping o'er the sands,  
 Come hither, hither, gentle fays,  
 For to your loving hands  
 A golden headed child we bear,  
 A waif from distant lands.

The child arrives at a time when "the moon struggles for an instant through the dark clouds", a time always special to the animistic Crawford mind. The mermaids define the dilemma in their third and final song:

Wake the waif and love her well,  
 Wreathe her round with fairy spell,  
 In thy rosy bowers.  
 T'is a gift we snatched for thee  
 From the all-devouring sea,  
 Strew her path with flowers.  
 See her mem'ry goes not back  
 To the dull and mortal track  
 She so far hath trod;  
 Till she join thy elfin band,  
 Dancing with thee hand in hand  
 On the dewy sod.

The fairies possess the ability to transform the child from weakness to health by giving her a medicine of "berries that were very much esteemed by their tribe for their exhilarating (sic) properties". Despite the loving efforts of the fairies to lavish Goldie with the riches of their milieu, she cannot forget her human mother. Wava recognises the power of the tie, one of the most powerful relationships in the Crawford

universe. Fleetwing, king of the migrant birds, can effect her return, by carrying one of Goldie's curls to her mother.

Fleetwing, named in a manner reminiscent of Crawford's Indian motifs, represents her concept of the male principle and masculine duty in the determination of the correct order of things. Fleetwing can move from kingdom to kingdom, like Goldenball, or Max, in "Malcolm's Katie". He is another prefiguration of Crawford's most famous characters. Just as Katie must work toward union with Max through the transforming power of her love; Max must work physically to transform the land into a home-stead fit for Katie's occupancy. The fairies and the mermaids alone do not have the power to return Goldie to the sphere appropriate to her nature nor has the bird alone. However, working in consort, they have the power, literally, to change the world.

If the grieving mother can be linked to Demeter and the lost child to Persephone, a peculiar relationship is projected between the girl and the shark, the Hades figure. The human child in the magical kingdom is quite alien, and can be tricked in ways that a fairy never could. She adopts a liberal view of the shark; she cannot see any danger in the island cosmos. As the shark attempts to lure her into his jaws, she thinks, "Oh, dear! How ugly he looks", but she speaks to him politely, "Yes, indeed, master shark, and I hope you are quite well". In their rescue of the child, the mermaids finish off the shark without remorse. It is the only time he has seriously threatened the world and he is left to starve to death, his mouth permanently pried open with a branch of coral, as the mermaids triumphantly sing

Swim away, dive away, ugly old shark!  
 Down to your cavern so deep and so dark.  
 Dear little Goldie is safe on the shore.  
 Wicked old monster, come hither no more.

The mermaids final task is the ferrying of the child to meet her mother. Goldie is left with only the memory of fairyland, and never hears of it again. Crawford says something about the transitory fantasy life of the child, who may be able to directly perceive underlying activities in the world that are veiled for the adult. Cobb, in studying biographies of more than 300 creative adults finds

. . . certain aspects of childhood experience remain in the memory as a psychophysical force, an élan, which produces the pressure to perceive creatively and inventively. For from this position, creative and constructive mental processes do not result from an accumulation of information, but from the maintaining of a continued plasticity of response of the whole organism to new information and in general to the outer world.<sup>15</sup>

Crawford's presentation of the idea of the woman (or female principle) holding the world together and the man (or male principle) venturing forth to other worlds translates into a study of the Victorian family situation, not very changed a century later. Perceptions of the universe may come from mystic communion with nature, but they also come from the social environment in which the child spends most of her time. In Crawford's case, her father ventured from town to town in search of a permanent medical practice, and her mother maintained the family through extreme poverty, the alcoholism of her husband<sup>16</sup> and the deaths of all but two of her children.



Other short stories of Crawford's showing this amalgam of the plot and characters simple enough for the child's easy understanding, yet containing an underlying philosophy worthy of deeper concentration, are "The Rival Roses"<sup>17</sup> and "How the Nightingale and the Parrot wooed the Rose".<sup>18</sup> Apart from the blantant homily of "The Rival Roses", the story contains a message illustrative of Crawford's attitudes toward art and civilization. Crawford takes on the role of the elf, the otherworldly message-carrier, in telling the tale of the contest between the cultivated natural rose and the wax copy of a rose. As usual, the rose is central to the Crawford garden, as the water-lily is central to her wilder pond or bush gardens. The roses vie for their mistress's attention. Although each has an equal place in her regard, both are destroyed, not through their own doings but through the accident of a "rude boy" in the company of the party where both are being shown off. Both Crawford constants of the personified magical garden universe and its attached moral interpretation are evident.

A further definition of what, for Crawford, is "civilized" appears in "How the Nightingale and the Parrot wooed the Rose". The garden is profuse, exotic, and extremely cultivated, both in flora and fauna; with peacock, parrot, and sorrowing nightingale inhabiting it. The flowers and the birds and the fairies indulge in a fête where the genusi mix in time, space and the physical limitations that would be accorded each if the Crawford world operated on a purely physical plane.

The Queen of the Fairies instigates a contest to see which bird, the flamboyant parrot or the sincere but sombre nightingale, will win the hand of the rose, the crowning glory of the cultivated garden. The outcome shows Crawford's definition of the useful, one that prefigures her social conscience in her poems "September in Toronto", "Canada to England" and sections of "The Hunters Twain". The parrot praises the rose's beauty in his excursion into the more conventional world, but the nightingale devotes his vocally limited powers to a night of song that aids a sick child. The fairy decides the victor is the nightingale, the performer of the useful act, and shows Crawford's basic link with the exigencies of life outside the magical garden.

## v

Were Crawford's fairy stories written specifically for children? From the language, it seems unlikely. Words such as "encomiums" used in "The Waterlily" would only have been understood by the very precocious. Only one tale seems to be addressed to a child. The homiletic passage which concludes "The Rival Roses" is addressed:

Little reader, the moral find out for yourself;  
 Or beg the assistance of some spiritely elf;  
 Yet, stay! as kind fairies are rather scarce now.  
 I'll tell you the secret to clear up your brow.  
 It is this, don't be envious whatever you do,  
 It can't take from your rival and won't add to you;  
 And you'll feel twice as happy throughout all your days  
 When you've given to each one his due need of praise!<sup>19</sup>

This pointed reiteration of a moral obvious to an adult reader is similar to the homilies presented in a small collection of verses, bound in

manuscript with blue cord,<sup>20</sup> apparently designed to provide moral direction for the middle class Victorian child. These poems are without the magical qualities of the fairy stories, and present a down-to-earth view of the virtues of the "good child". They are fairly gruesome. For example, the child "Angry Jack" meets a sorry end when he misses on a punch at his sister and breaks his arm on the edge of the table. Crawford concludes:

. . . , and girls and boys,  
 who would escape poor Jack's annoys  
 Your Tempers learn to Rule! 21

Other of these homiletic poems have cats beaten for stealing the cream, thus learning "to make an honest meal"<sup>22</sup>. A similarly unpleasant comeuppance is met by "Dirty Jim", a grimy child who finally decides to wash and finds himself condemned to remain forever dirty. Crawford warns children to take heed of his fate, and wash their faces and hands.<sup>23</sup>

"Tommy Mutton, a most unfeeling, selfish Glutton", meets his doom when he attempts to steal honey from a beehive. In the predictable dénouement, Tommy runs home, "his head swollen like a mellon (sic)."<sup>24</sup> In her recap of the story of "Idle Jane", Crawford cautions:

Now Children all you surely know,  
 How right it is to learn to sew,  
     Both fancy work and plain!  
 I'm sure that for each one's own sake  
 You never would example take,  
 By idle little Jane!.<sup>25</sup>

Crawford shows how dire punishment can become, in the fate that befalls the child of "The Bad Little Boy and the Frog". A boy enjoys the pain of a frog who sprains his leg in a misgauged jump. In an attempt

to prod the frog off his log, he himself falls into the water. Crawford remorselessly concludes:

As he struggled about  
 To the frog he cried out  
 "Oh! Froggie do help me to shore".  
 And the frog did reply  
 "Yes, truly I'll try  
 Though I think I can't swim any more."

But the frog was too weak,  
 And the bad boy's last shriek,  
 Was smothered at once by the fog!  
 As the frog's strength did fail,  
 So ends this sad tale,  
 Of the Bad little Boy, and the Frog!<sup>26</sup>

The homilies and the fairy stories show the disparate qualities of Crawford's attitude toward childhood. It is both the magic time of assimilating the underlying cosmic order and the time for acquiring the virtues appropriate to regimented life in the everyday world, where one must be industrious, kind to animals, and keep one's face washed. But the cosmology presented in both sets of writing is synonymous, for the world is presented as invincibly ordered in its goodness, with evil as a component force that bears no serious threat, for if necessary it can be destroyed with minimal effort.

Crawford formed a distinct impression of the world about her at an early age. The landscape, constantly changing, is imbued with magical properties. The same magic is inherent in the small creatures inhabiting it: insects, birds and fish. These creatures soon will become humanized and eventually will become complex characters. Although Crawford is possessed of an incurable optimism, the darker side of life began to show

itself in the animal images of the storm and the shark in "Wava". Non-domestic animals, with the exception of the stag, always remain dark in the Crawford cosmology. They become their darkest in the stampede of yellow bulls in "Old Spookses Pass".

While the audience projected for the short poems is clearly to be the child, the fairy stories seem intended for both child and adult. Certainly they contain enough imaginative description to fascinate the child and enough intellectual depth for the adult. Crawford writes fairy stories in the same enigmatic way that fairy stories always have been written, from Beowulf through to Oscar Wilde. Like folklore of so-called primitive peoples, they present an entire concept of the world within the confines of a simple plot and one-dimensional characters.

Crawford's fairy stories stand alone as genuine Canadian folklore, representing the cosmological vision of more than just one Celtic immigrant who had imaginative flair and a facility with language. The fairy folk of the Old World transpose successfully into a landscape that blends the cultivation of the past with the lushness of the Canadian country garden. An extremely simple view of a very complicated cosmology can be illuminating as well as charming. The longer stories, like "The Waterlily" and "Wava, the Fairy of the Shell" provide enjoyable reading because of the scope of their magical action and the richness of the descriptive passages. As items in the Crawford canon, the fairy stories provide signals for the direction her imaginative functioning will take in maturity, and help the reader understand her work and life. In most everything she writes Crawford tells a story, in the fairy tales we see glimpses of the multi-dimensional plots

that will mature into narratives, and the kinds of stock characters which will evolve into archetypal Canadian persons who combine natural and magical attributes.

Crawford's optimism about the power of good to overcome destructive forces shows very clearly in these early fairy stories. She never loses her faith in goodness, although she will find some contradictions in it that will allow her to write convincingly about the power of Despair in "The Hunters Twain". This optimism has its conservative edge in the remorseless punishment of those who attempt to thwart the eternal cyclic growth of the world. Later this conservatism becomes most evident in her brand of nationalism which shows her desire to see Canada created as a new Eden, apart from Britain, but built in Britain's image.

## CHAPTER II

At first glance, Isabella Valancy Crawford's poetry might seem romantic or escapist, particularly if examined in conjunction with the brief facts of her biography. However, deeper examination of both the poetry and biography show that Crawford did not write in order to escape her shabby surroundings, but to make sense of them through her optimistic vision of the future. As a true visionary writer, Crawford does not divorce herself from the particular experiences typical for a woman of her time, place and class. Rather, she adapts current conventions in order to achieve specific literary goals. Her move to Toronto in her mid-twenties shows her seriousness of purpose as a creative writer; the content of the works examined in this thesis, particularly "Malcolm's Katie" shows that her poetics involved the transforming of her experience of the present to incorporate the past and the future in order to produce an ordered, epic vision of Canada.

i

There is great difficulty in defining periods in the life of a writer who only lived to age thirty-seven. People reach artistic peaks at different times. It is possible, and likely, Isabella Crawford never reached hers. Perhaps the poems I refer to here as "mature" Crawford are only glimpses of a talent that would become more regular, assured, less self-indulgent and melodramatic. This is why it is so important to establish a chronology of Crawford's life and influences, so that her means of inspiration and method of composition can be determined; so that, finally,

she can be evaluated within her historical framework and with the novelists and poets of the same period in Canadian literature. I consider this thesis to be one part of a larger "work in progress" that must be done on Isabella Valancy Crawford, and only for organizational purposes have I divided the works I examine into "early", "middle" and "mature".

Probably works chronologically overlap; for example, Garvin states in his 1905 article for The Canadian Bookman that he is sure that "Malcolm's Katie" was composed in Crawford's twenty-fifth year,<sup>1</sup> yet this was the time that Crawford was beginning to submit short stories to periodicals. A more precise ordering of her works will show the operation of the Crawford imagination upon the input of her environment, culture and fantasy life.

Within the works I discuss as "early works", I include the homiletic poems for children, and the more important fairy stories. In the "middle period", I discuss only one short story in depth, for it is, roughly, between 1873 and 1876 then that Crawford probably begins to write longer novels, stories and poems, and seriously ventures into publication of her work in the literary periodicals of her time. I suggest as the "mature" period the one in which she produced the poems deemed to be her finest, such as "Gisli, the Chieftain", "Old Spookses' Pass", "Malcolm's Katie" and "The Hunters Twain" which is available only in manuscript in the Lorne Pierce Collection or in part, in the article by Dorothy Livesay in the Winter 1973 issue of Canadian Literature.<sup>2</sup>



However, this principle of organization works in the evaluative sense, since critical appraisal of the success of each work is necessary in determining the overall message of the poet and her success in conveying it. Since the definition of success becomes important here, and since I believe it to be the critic's duty to present her or his biases very openly for the reader's information, I determine "success" to be the degree in which a writer organizes her own perceptions and activities so that she can accurately convey an historically correct impression of her times, if not influence them directly. In defense of my method, I present the clearly social and humanistic concerns of the poet herself, and her own metaphors, which are sometimes mixed.

A short story, titled "Huldah's Arrow", fourteen pages in length handwritten in a blue school copy book paper bound with white thread, suggests the interests of Crawford's "middle" period. It is signed on the back of the last page "Isabella Valancy Crawford, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada West," and dated May 13th, 1873.<sup>3</sup> Significantly, this is the year that Crawford published her first poem, "The Vesper Star", in The Mail, Toronto.<sup>4</sup> This story, shows Crawford's concern with lavish descriptions of wealthy settings and the picaresque characters who inhabit them, as well as presenting a homily on the evil of jealousy.

In this same time period, when Crawford discovered lovers and ancestors, as well as the literary market, she wrote "Aunt Dorry's Potpourri" a story which shows the same qualities that seem to be present in the novels I have scanned, as well as showing in prose a theme constant in her poetry,

that of the link between the old world and the new. It is reprinted in Appendix C.<sup>5</sup>

Crawford assumes the airs of a young lady with her brisk opening, "You know what potpourri is, don't you?", and after an excited tale of noble but ill-starred ancestors, she breezily adds, "You can find out all these things in Debrett, you know, and very stupid reading it is I must say, and awfully provoking to ladies whose ages are faithfully recorded therein." The tone of the whole piece is of both the person who is writing light fiction for the trade, and the serious writer who is beginning to develop characters, and take herself seriously as a novelist as well as a poet. In "Aunt Dorry's Potpourri"'s kaleidoscopic plot, we see an entirely different facet of the Crawford literary imagination. The roses of the potpourri revive a dream-like account of the "Towers of Brockhampton" and Lady Gwida Hildegarde Brockhampton, a "Norman, not a Saxon blonde", who leaves the estate and the Brockhampton pearls behind to live in Antwerp with her lover, a Spanish jeweller who has been commissioned to "sun" the pearls.

Unfortunately for the character development of the ancestors, they are most clearly presented in the description of their rich clothes, from which their eyes flash. The moment of union, the recognition of love at first sight, occurs most vividly in the meeting of a rainbow brocade and a peach-colored coat. But the incorrigible Crawford sense of the epic encounter saves the story through her description of its location, the Eden of cultivated England, where

The Sussex hills like sapphire ramparts  
 close-painted in the very arch of Heaven,  
 the sea a cestus of living gold fretted  
 with fire, before the glancing of great  
 stag eyes in the yellow bracken . . . .

Crawford brings all that splendour to the setting of her other  
 Eden, the new civilization of North America. The persona of the story  
 lives

just out of New York in a lovely villa  
 with a dazzling pearl-white facade lying  
 in a noble stretch of lawn and finely  
 thrown out by a rising background of  
 dark, dark pines . . . .

The scent of the roses of the potpourri provides the link between  
 the ancestors who were perfectly happy in the old world and the heroine who  
 is perfectly happy in the new. She who inherited the jeweller's dark Spanish  
 eyes (a look at Crawford's dark eyes in her photograph and the knowledge that  
 the name "Valancy" derives from "Valencia" suggest this characterisation may  
 not be entirely derived from fantasy), will marry a Harry Latimer, a man  
 from her own part of the country (note the Francophone name). The two worlds  
 mesh well.

ii

As we have seen in "Aunt Dorry's Potpourri", Crawford's  
 imagination moves easily back and forth between the landscape of the old  
 world and that of the new. But her real imaginative locale is the new  
 world and the question of landscape, or, more specifically environment, is  
 central to any discussion of her work.

In most of her poems and short stories, at whatever time they are written, we see a landscape that is alive, personified, a force in the drama as important as any characters. An important aspect of the study of Crawford's imaginative process is the factual determination of the correspondence between the landscape she created in each work and the landscape which she experienced while composing it. Equally important is a definitive chronology of Crawford's cultural and social contacts, and possible psychological influences. For example, it can only be surmised that much of Crawford's blank verse, including "Malcolm's Katie", was composed during the time she lived in Lakefield and Peterborough, from the thirteenth to the twenty-sixth years of her life, at the time of her most intense intellectual influence through reading, and intense emotional crises upon the deaths of her father and sister.<sup>6</sup>

The Peterborough area was charged with a sense of the ancestry of its native people, as shown in the writings of Catharine Parr Traill and, more recently, in Dorothy Livesay's article on Crawford; "Tennyson's Daughter or Wilderness Child?".<sup>7</sup> The Ojibways had lived there for millenia, and had imprinted the story of their origins and beliefs on the rocks in the form of petroglyphs still to be seen near Stony Lake. So too, were the native myths imprinted on the mind of the young woman who shared in their animism.

Study of the use of Crawford's Indian imagery illustrates the eclectic use she made of her surroundings, her reading, and the cultural values prevalent in her day. She seems to have absorbed the sense of the

heroic in the British sense of conquest and colonization. There is a sharp contrast between the Indian brave of this magnificent passage from "Malcolm's Katie",

From his far wigwam sprang the strong North Wind  
 And rushed with war-cry down the steep ravines,  
 And wrestled with the giants of the woods;  
 And with his ice-club beat the swelling crests  
 Of the deep watercourses into death;  
 And with his chill foot froze the whirling leaves  
 Of dun and gold and fire in icy banks;  
 And smote the tall reeds to the hardened earth,  
 And sent his whistling arrows o'er the plains,  
 Scattering the lingering herds; and sudden paused  
 When he had frozen all the running streams,  
 And hunted with his war-cry all the things  
 That breathed about the woods, or roamed the bleak,  
 Bare prairies swelling to the mournful sky.<sup>8</sup>

and the actual facts of the lives of native peoples during the purges of the 1870s. Although Crawford has internalised the feeling of fellowship with the woods and the smaller of the creatures who live there, those myths are as real to the woman of 1870 as to the indigenous people of the same locale 2000 years earlier. We see the evidence in Crawford's mythologised landscapes; in the very fact that she conceived of landscape as personified.

Beyond this, her link with the Canadian Indian is literary and romantic rather than social and political. I do not intend to infer that Crawford was a conscious racist; probably her sympathies lay with the native people she encountered in the Peterborough environs, her fellows in poverty. However, her literary treatment of Canadian Indians is more akin to that of the white, humanist Longfellow, coloured with the British quality of absorbing and marketing any exotica it might encounter. I suggest accounts of the British conquest of India, occurring during this period, to substantiate this claim.

Crawford absorbed the native union with the cycle of the seasons on a personal mythological level, rather than on a social one.) Although she admired the

hero, whom she defined as the man who works for a particular cause, she did not, within her known writings, acknowledge Riel or Gabriel Dumont as such. Her politics derive from her own culture. She internalised the value of the form of Canadian nationalism prevalent at the time, with its policy of quiet elimination of the native people. When the struggle attains the level of actual battle, she serenades the soldiers returning from the battle of Batoche in 1884, with "The Rose of a Nation's Thanks", which concentrates on the joy of the mothers, wives and children at glorious return of their soldier relatives.<sup>9</sup> She does not comment upon the imprisonment of Poundmaker and Big Bear. Her cause is the cause of the impoverished settlers, and particularly that of the woman, whom she sees as holding together the social fabric. Although the Cree and Metis may have attempted to withstand the encroachment of the Canadian Pacific Railroad upon their lands and livelihood, Crawford serenades the returning army with the lines

A welcome? O Joy, can they stay your feet  
 or measure the wine of your bliss?  
 O Joy, let them have you alone today - a  
 day with a pulse like this.  
 A welcome? Yes, 'tis a tender thought, a  
 green laurel that laps the sword -  
 But Joy has the wing of a wild white  
 swan, and the song of a free white bird!..  
 .....  
 And what could ye have? There isn't a lad  
 will burst from the shouting ranks  
 But bears like a star on his faded coat  
 the Rose of a Nation's Thanks!.. .10

that show that her driving political force is an idealistic Canadian nationalism, which does not critically examine the cost to native people or those who perform the actual back-breaking tasks for those most interested in the concept of Canadian nationhood for profit. Any analogy to those

working toward the cause of Canadian nationalism in the 1970s, with the same disregard for native people, the colony of Québec, or for the actual producers of the nation, is absolutely intentional.

Crawford's social conscience extended to the poor but not to those of another race. Her sentiment is bourgeois nationalism, above all. Perhaps too, she is pragmatic in her inclusion of the Indian motif in so much of her published work. As evidenced by the reception of Hiawatha which first appeared in 1855, and the late nineteenth century tours in England of Pauline Johnson, the British were very interested in the exotica of the colonies. The sophisticated Crawford literary style, combined with material about Canadian native people and the "cowboys" of the Canadian West, made her 1884 book very likely to be well received by the British public. Perhaps that was her reason for the title "Old Spookses' Pass," "Malcolm's Katie" and other Poems, considered so disastrous by Canadian critics.<sup>11</sup>

This criticism of Crawford's social conscience is not intended to suggest that she had no social conscience whatsoever, but to point out its direction. (It is important to demystify her as the champion of the Canadian Indian, as she is often claimed to be.) Such interpretation of her work usually becomes far more racist than the lyrics themselves might be through their separation from a social context. John Ower, for example, examines some Crawford lyrics, such as "the Canoe" and decides they study the psychology of "uncivilised man", who in his mind, is closer to "basic" psychic activity than the more "civilised" person.<sup>12</sup> (Crawford respected the cosmology of the native Canadian, and probably relived some of it

herself. She also lived the life of a poor, but genteel, white woman in a late nineteenth-century Canadian city, and those two visions are not at once compatible, particularly if the intellectual tools with which to reconcile them are not at hand.

Another insidious form of the "Canadian Singer" approach to Crawford has her as the most prominent nineteenth century writer to blend the old and the new towards the formation of a "native mythology". Critics have touted the need to establish a Canadian identity and mythology. Northop Frye states that "the central myth of art must be the vision at the end of the social effort, the innocent world of fulfilled desire, the free human society".<sup>13</sup> There is little to argue about the need for a Canadian mythology, or even with the above definition of it. However, one must assure that the practical application of the definition includes the many facets of complex Canadian society, and bears some relationship to Canadian social history and the varying groups of the population who have moved it forward. Poets do not possess the only reservoir of cultural history, and they are as capable of lying about what they know as well as anyone else.

(When all her work is examined, Crawford may prove to be a "mythopoeic poet", and fulfill the requirements of the Frygian definition of social vision.) However, at the short distance of one hundred years, Crawford's "free human society" seems one that is very limited for the native person or the woman of any race.) The scope of Crawford's uniquely Canadian mythology is still not remotely visible except to few; most of us are still experiencing desire for another more egalitarian social order, as Crawford did, but see its



realisation to be more likely in a complete turnabout of the current one which is still made in the reflection of a colonising power.

(In dealing with Crawford's contribution to the establishment of a "native mythology" it is important to recognize the limitations her bourgeois cultural heritage, her impoverished petit bourgeois source of livelihood, and her sex would have had upon her imagination and creative output. Crawford certainly had a social conscience, but it was limited by her circumstances and her isolation.) A false or incomplete vision of how an egalitarian social order might be achieved is not a fault of her imaginative powers, but a fault of the society in which they were exercised.

iii

Crawford's stay in Paisley, Lakefield and Peterborough is usually described as the carefree life of an extremely sensitive girl who became involved in the movement of the landscape because of the dire poverty of her family. While this is probably correct it should also be remembered that Peterborough was a growing industrial town; that logs floated down the Otonabee River; that loggers performed the work of the axe, as described in the work of Maxwell Gardon in "Malcolm's Katie", not to clear a homestead, but in the employ of the various logging companies in Canada West. The landscape must be critically defined in its botanical beauty, with the inclusion of the loggers and dam-builders who worked there in darkness and poverty.

Also important is a view of the Crawford biography in terms of the larger social unit; within terms of the family unit and its interplays, and in terms of her friends and acquaintances. When Crawford moved to Toronto with her mother in 1876, they (and one brother in Algoma) were the only surviving members of a large family decimated by disease and the rigours of famine in Ireland, and by poverty and isolation in Canada.<sup>14</sup> Crawford always lived in a colony of the British empire. Although she may not have recognized it as such, colonization affected her life in almost as brutal a way as it had the lives of the first inhabitants of Canada, its native peoples. However, Crawford does not see freedom for Ireland in revolutionary terms; in the poem "Erin's Warning" she urges that justice and honour, in the parliamentary sense are the means to end the subjugation of the Irish people:

Erin lift thy bending head,  
 Rise majestic by the sea;  
 Say in soul-compelling voice:  
 Sons, who fain would have me free,  
 Have a care, lest when ye rend  
 From my limbs the biting chain,  
 Ye, my sons around my brow  
 Bind the fiery crown of shame!<sup>15</sup>

Her politics are akin to those of Thomas D'Arcy McGee and her devotion to the parliamentary system steadfast. Although she clearly recognizes oppression, she is blind to the fact of colonization as part of its cause. From "Erin's Warning":

At my knee my starvelings lay,  
 Jewels crowned my captive head--  
 Hearken, God, I might not sell  
 One to buy my children bread!  
 Beauty, fresh, immortal dwelt  
 On my bent and hapless brow;  
 Conquered but unshamed I sat--  
 Sons, why would you shame me now?<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps Crawford's ability to continue writing of imaginary landscapes with great precision and power derived from her power to store memories of landscapes down to the most minute detail and to recreate the scene through its transformation into language. The Crawfords were always migrants; the family moved from Scotland to Ireland (possibly from Ireland to Australia, and from there to Canada); from Ireland to Paisley, Canada West, from Paisley to Lakefield, from Lakefield to Peterborough, from Peterborough to Toronto. The alleged reason for all these moves was Dr. Crawford's intent to establish a remunerative medical practice, which, possibly because of his alcoholism, he never managed. He appears to have died penniless.<sup>17</sup>

What else could a young Irish-Canadian woman, with literary hopes but no financial means, do but move to the hub of the Canadian publishing industry? The Crawfords did not own their own house in Peterborough; that would not hold her there. Bourgeois status does not matter much without bourgeois means of obtaining money. A man might find work in the bush, as did her brother Stephen Walter, or become a Navy doctor as her uncle John. Crawford's alternatives were on a smaller scale. She might become a governess, but there were very few Canadian families with the means to hire a servant with the exclusive duty of the education of their children.<sup>18</sup> She might become another kind of servant, a "home-help", the most common occupation for women at that time. She might work in a factory but those jobs were more for those born working-class, not for those who fell to it. She might find a rich husband; in fact, one wonders why she didn't. Certainly her education and social graces, attested to by Mrs. Stuart, would have been worthy.<sup>19</sup> Marriage would have allowed her to pursue a writing career and

support her mother with additional duties no less consuming than plodding to the publishers, manuscripts in hand, on an almost daily basis. Perhaps her young man went West to clear land, like Max, and never came back. Perhaps she didn't want to get married. Perhaps it was not bad luck but a conscious examination of the available choices that led her to accept her new status and economic position and not compromise her desire to become a writer.

Crawford's poems about Toronto, "The City Tree", "September in Toronto" and "Toronto" deal with the city more as a heavenly city, as an ideal, than as a city without adequate shelter, food, or sewage facilities for its inhabitants. Not a great deal is known about conditions of working class life in Toronto in the 1880's. The Royal Commission of 1889 provides a glimpse into factory conditions relevant to Crawford's work, since the possibility of failure to earn enough money for her and her mother to live on must have loomed constantly.<sup>20</sup> The Crawfords lived in the heart of the "sweating" area in their modest rooms at Miss Harrison's on Adelaide Street. Valancy's memorandum book survives, showing notations for the years 1885 and 1886.<sup>21</sup> It is difficult to tell what her rent was. Her notes "rent paid in full" are erratic, and the amount paid changes with the length of time between payments. The sense is of an extremely irregular income and back rent owed. Money would be trickling in from the sale of those 50 copies of Old Spookses' Pass which she published in 1884. Mrs. Harrison's is not listed in the City of Toronto Business Directory to 1880 as a registered boarding house.<sup>22</sup> Neither is Mrs. Stuart's, at whose house the Crawfords spent the last 16 months of Valancy Crawford's life. That house, at 57 John Street, still stands. Its position is shown in the map in Appendix D. There are two

stories of rooms over a storefront level, now a restaurant, facing the corner of King Street. Probably it was never much grander than it is now, and the character of the neighborhood remains unchanged. It is near the harbor and factories are still in operation in buildings which date from the same period. The establishment of James Bain, her printer, was around the corner at 51 King Street E., and the offices of the Evening Telegram, The Globe, and The Week were all within close walking distance.

Survival on an income of two or three dollars a week must have been painstaking. It is occasionally mentioned that Crawford's uncle, John Crawford, provided her and her mother with a small allowance. However, Wilson, writing in 1905, says that the contribution stopped while they were in Peterborough.<sup>23</sup> It seems that the Crawford women survived on the proceeds of Valancy's writing. However, it is feasible that Irish pride gave way to Irish practicality, and Mrs. Crawford engaged in some sort of genteel work, such as dressmaking. We know that Crawford sewed her own clothes from notations about the cost of ten yards of material (\$2), five yards of material, (\$1), lining, border (0.50) and handkerchief ribbon (\$1). Probably she used scraps of these sewing projects in her embroideries, one of which still exists in the Peterborough Museum.<sup>24</sup>

There is some information available on the usual cost of a diet heavy on starches but adequate to maintain the health of a factory worker. It is likely that the Crawfords, with their Irish heritage, ate a great deal of starch. This may be responsible for Valancy's alleged "stoutness".<sup>25</sup> Contemporary figures show a diet comprising bread, oatmeal, butter, lard, a

small amount of meat, tea, sugar would cost about eighty cents per capita per week.<sup>26</sup>

As well as a strictly economic analysis, some literature on the "quality of life" in Toronto would inform a reading of her poetry. A brief, but vivid example can be found in a survey conducted by the Toronto Board of Health in 1884. Of 5181 houses inspected, only 873 had water closets. Among the others, there were 201 foul wells, 278 foul cisterns, 814 full privies, 570 foul privies, 739 cases of slops being thrown into privies, 668 cases of slops in the streets, 1207 cases of no drainage whatsoever and 503 of bad drainage. The report described Toronto Bay as a disgrace to the city, that "the limpid bay of half a century ago has been converted into what is little better than a cesspool".<sup>27</sup> In the "Hunters Twain" narrative she wrote, far more effectively,

With the illimitable wilderness around  
 From the close city hives rang up the groan  
 So little space -- we starve -- we faint -- we die.  
 Lord! Lord! to see the gaping city sewer  
 Beaded with haggard heads and hungry eyes  
 Peering above the heaving of the drains  
 And hear the harsh, unreasonable cry  
 "We starve, we starve!" While half a world lay fresh  
 And teeming out beyond the city gates!<sup>28</sup>

Comparison of the factual and the dramatic account vividly shows the eclectic use Crawford made of all sensual and imaginary data available to her. The character Hugh, to whom Crawford attributed these lines in the narrative, maintains his optimism only through returning to the wilderness. The poet Valancy Crawford seems to have maintained her faith in a vision of the future despite her residence in the city until her death.

We know The Globe paid one to three dollars for poems. Compensation for short stories cannot be computed, but we do know that Crawford definitely counted the words in her short stories and novels. Perhaps she was paid by the line or by the column inch. However, many of her stories appeared in publications that were not collected and now are lost. The only known research into the back files of the major Toronto newspaper was done by Garvin in the early 1900s.<sup>29</sup> He is not noted for his meticulous scholarship, the work should be done again. Other periodicals in which Crawford appeared paid very little.

A computation, as exact as possible, of Crawford's income and expenses would be invaluable in deciding the options available for the genteel poor woman in artistic or literary talent. It would show who could become a writer and who could not. It would help decide Crawford's exact level of poverty, thus knowing how far from her environment her imagination ranged. We could also tell the effect of poverty on her health; if inadequate nutrition and housing near the cesspool of Toronto Bay contributed to her early death.

The bare facts about the neighborhood in which Crawford lived and wrote reveal a quality about her mind: an incredible personal optimism that allowed her to resist shabby material circumstances and withdraw into a fantasy world of rich estates in the far-away places where her novels are set. If the composition of her major narrative poem "Malcolm's Katie",

was in Peterborough as Wilson and Garvin suggest, then it can be said that the move to Toronto turned Crawford into a serious novelist. This theory, borne out by the dates extant on some novels, shows on an individual level a development parallel to the development of the novel as a literary form. As the outer world becomes noisier and more crowded and more stratified, the writer reacts to the pressures by producing statements about the whole fabric of society and the social relationships, rather than poems which discuss a metaphysical framework built around an animated landscape.

A glance at some of Crawford's lyrics written during this period in Toronto shows a less potent sense of landscape than in the short stories and poems of the Peterborough era. "September in Toronto"<sup>30</sup> is one of her lyrics where exotic allusions seem "tacked on" to uplift a mundane theme. At least she carries through. One can trust Crawford to round out references to Roman chariots with images full of the rawness and vigor one usually associates with that city at its height.

September is a victor here, as in "A Harvest Song",<sup>31</sup> not the harbinger of wintry death. He rides into the city on a chariot, bearing all "the riches of the spoil". He is a market farmer raised to the mythic proportion of autumn itself. Crawford describes all the fruits of a successful growing season, an unusual event after the depression of the 1870s. The farmer has conquered the soil and conquered "captive Famine" with the "glare of wolf-red eyes". In her Roman metaphor, the Vestals are Art and Science. There is a suggestion that they flourish in the perfume of "mellowed fruits", i.e. when there is enough to eat. One thinks of her



line in "Hunters Twain": "Hope, without breakfast, has a swooning trick".<sup>32</sup>

"The City Tree", published on September 4, 1880,<sup>33</sup> represents one of Crawford's only biographical statements. Frank Bessai calls it a "spiritual autobiography".<sup>34</sup> Here she expressed her longing for the inspiration and freedom of a more pastoral setting than the city in which she found herself. In the poem are portraits of both Toronto and Peterborough, the city and the town.

The poem opens in the "stony", "arid" city. The situation is hopeless, held in the word "forever", repeated twice:

I stand within the stony, arid town,  
I gaze forever on the narrow street,  
I hear forever passing up and down  
The ceaseless tramp of feet.

The tree is personified, like most natural elements in Crawford's poems, but not mythologised as the seasons and the changing aspects of nature that she portrays, for example, in the South Wind of "Malcolm's Katie". This tree is more than a symbol of a tree; more than an image of a tree. (I use "symbol" in the sense of an object used to represent something beyond itself, and "image" in the sense of something used to represent the thing it is). Crawford used personification for dramatic effect. She rarely has an inanimate landscape. She also personified when she wanted to talk about herself and her loneliness. However, her personified subjects operate only in the first three dimensions that describe physical reality. They are not so developed as the mythologised subjects which have four or five

dimensions as they move through space and time. These forces in the world, the movers and changers, are given a life beyond the moment of one event. Their history affects the change of the seasons, individual lives, and the formation of the world.

This personified tree in Toronto recalls its brothers in more sustaining surroundings, a pathetic fallacy perhaps, but Crawford used it to say something about her own life in the pastoral setting. The tree of the plain grows amid fellow creatures absent in the city enslaved to industry.

The city tree mourns:

No emerald vines creep wistfully to me  
And lay their tender fingers on my bark,

.....

My heart is never pierced with song of bird  
My leaves know nothing of that glad unrest  
Which makes a flutter in the still woods heard  
When wild birds build a nest.

After much discussion of the longed-for beauties of the country, Crawford returns to describe the city locale, heightening the contrast and further increasing the poignancy of the loss of the winds and flowers and birds of the town. A compromise is offered in the sense of what comfort the tree can provide for "the city toilers", and the link it provides for the children, whose clear "crystal eyes" show them to be at one with the unchained Nature of the tree, with the "mystic skies" that cover both the city and the country.

Crawford describes the condition of a typical Toronto resident, man or woman; but most likely, her own experience:

My shade is broad, and there  
 Come city toilers, who their hour of ease  
 Weave out to precious seconds as they lie  
 Pillowed on horny hands, to hear the breeze  
 Through my great branches die.

"Toronto" seems not to have been published in either the newspaper nor in Crawford's 1884 edition of her poetry.<sup>34</sup> Garvin's posthumous use of it in his 1905 edition indicated he must have the manuscript, yet that manuscript is not in the Crawford collection at the Douglas Library. The poem, despite its title, tells us little about Toronto, but something about how Crawford felt about living there. The poem affirms that she found something grand in the dusty, lonely city, and about the choice she herself had made: the choice between remaining in Peterborough or moving on to an unknown future in Toronto. Again, her use of personification dramatises the subject and tells us something about Crawford

She moves to meet the centuries . . .

. . . . .  
 Her tire is rich, not with stout battlements,  
 Prophets of strife, but wealthy with tall spires  
 All shining Godward, rare with learning's domes,  
 And burning with young stars that promise suns  
 to clasp her older brows.

The world is developing, like the world in "Gisli the Chieftain". This image of stars as growing seeds operates in that poem as well:

In Space's ocean suns were spray  
 Swift comets fell like noiseless dew;  
 Young earths slow budded in the blue.<sup>35</sup>

It appears again in her more political poem "Canada to England", "Ages will watch/ Those seeds expand to suns . . ." <sup>36</sup> Clearly part of her optimism was her vision of the world as temporal, that it would go through the birth-

death-rebirth cycle as any other organism. So, for a time, she could forget poverty, dirt and her own small room in the future she imagines for this city. Toronto is personified as a woman, a strong woman who does not idly sit and dream, but who

. . . hears the marching centuries which Time  
Leads up the dark peaks of Eternity:

. . . . .

The roses of her young feet turn to flame,  
Yet ankle-deep in tender buds of spring:

The past will fuse with the present, in another Crawford dichotomy of the struggle of two forces to achieve a future vision. Crawford obviously believed in the contribution of each to the gestalt of the heavenly Toronto of the future: "Toronto, joy and peace!" This Toronto yet to be achieved, must be perfect in her fidelity to her humble origins:

. . . still remember thee  
Of thy first cradle on the lilies lap  
in the dim woods; and tho' thy diadem  
Make a new sunrise, still amid its flame,  
Twine for the nursing lilies sake the glow  
Of God-like lilies round thy brows--  
Honour and Peace and sweet-breathed Charity!

The passage is notable for its combination of images of birth, very typical of the Crawford world, frequently seen in the spring of its cycle. Here she combines images of the baby ("cradle", "nursing"), the spring, the lilies, the sunrise. The star-as-the-seed-of-a-new-sun image carries through to the sentiment that the brightness of the sun will be in direct proportion to the Christian purity of the beam. This Toronto transcends the loom of Commerce and the layers of society to move towards a Utopian future.

Only by the most naive, the most nationally chauvinist and the most romantic could this poem be called prophetic. To the short vision of

one hundred years, the Toronto of the late nineteenth century contains the same harsh division between those who build the tall spires and domes of learning and those who worship or study there. Crawford's poems about Toronto are not among her better works. Perhaps the truth about Toronto was too bitter to tell, or too realistic a subject for the Victorian reader. They tell the reader about the writer herself, about a struggle to publish topical poetry for the payment necessary to survive. Meanwhile, Crawford is composing powerful narratives set in the forests and romantic novels set in far-off, wealthier places.

v

Crawford's childhood in the Kawartha Lakes district, the circumstances of her family and the move to Toronto were decisive factors shaping the author's imagination. Equally important were influences from her literary background.

Crawford's literary influences were the great visionaries of western and eastern culture, rather than satirists, religious or pastoral writers. This section does not propose to show in detail the influence of writers like Dante, Blake, Emerson echoing in Crawford's work, but merely to summarise the biographical data available on her educational background and reading. Early biographers show Crawford read western and eastern holy books, from the Bible through Homer; the Rg Vedas and the Bhagavad Gita. As a child, her favorite poet is supposed to have been Dante.<sup>36</sup> James Reaney has shown the preliminary outlines of the importance of Dante's influence; he emphasises the initiation Dante would have provided

Crawford into a huge systematised world that would extend her imaginative scope beyond her immediate surroundings and project a symbolism that would incorporate a larger universe.<sup>37</sup> It is unfortunate that Reaney's own analysis of the Crawford cosmos misnominates her central symbols and metaphysics, because he was the first to suggest that such a central system existed in both her prose and poetry.

The nearest-to-contemporary biographers say her schooling by her mother involved much Latin translation. She is claimed to have had special liking for Horace. (Clearly, from the evidence of her poems, she was familiar with Norse, Greek, Roman, Hebrew and North American Indian mythology.) Whether she derived her knowledge from primary or secondary sources is unclear and probably was of little interest to Crawford herself. Katherine Hale states she was taught French by her parents; certainly her prose writings show great interest in the subtle sense of le mot jusle.<sup>38</sup> For example, the opening sentence of "A Bar of Sunset", a short story "For Wise and Otherwise", written while Crawford lived in Toronto, reads "Gladys blushed finely, till her skin looked like a beaker of Clos de Vouquet with a mellow sunrise glancing through it."<sup>39</sup> One sheet of her research still extant shows Crawford's intense interest in "Italy-Customs-Religious".<sup>40</sup> The content of the page shows the type of celebration that held her interest. Typically, those that involved the very small creatures held particular interest; her page shows notations on fireflies, grasshoppers, doves and the fish of "Pesce d'aprile". These are the same species that she presented in her fairy tales, and that she will present in her mature works.

Crawford's multicultural classical heritage seems combined in her writings with her reading of her contemporaries. Although she was probably the sort of person who read everything she could get her hands on, she had obvious favorites who influenced her poetic structures and their content. Clearly the popular Tennyson suggested a dimension to her style: the interspersing of songs within a narrative structure. Another powerful influence on both style and content may have been Longfellow, comparable in position in New England letters to Tennyson in British. Blake's concepts of innocence and experience, good and evil, seem akin to Crawford's. Much of Browning has crept into her monologues, such as "Curtius", "Esther" and "Vashti".

Both Esther and Vashti, two powerful Old Testament queens are subjects of noted woman poets of this period, Crawford and Helen Hunt Jackson. It is difficult to determine who influenced the other, if in fact any influence did occur. Certainly the Book of Esther is one of the few Hebraic works that can be attributed any semblance of feminist content. Treatment of the two characters is vitally different in the works of the two women writers. Jackson's Vashti refuses to parade as a chattel before the king because she rationalises his demand as arising from a moment of drunkenness. She decides, "He will but bless me when he doth repent!"<sup>41</sup> Crawford's Vashti sees her acquiescence to the demand as totally shameful; she decides:

That day when Vashti leaves her sacred state,  
 As holy to her lord and life, the King,  
 And decks her beauty servant to the eyes  
 Of those who gorge as on a fair-limbed toy,  
 Then let her be accused of all queens  
 Who thro'all time shall share a throne; and of

All wives who would be sacred in their husband's eyes,  
As they do centre, to such wives, the world!<sup>42</sup>

Following the same pattern, Esther in Jackson's sonnet, muses and, concludes with the self-condemnation

Thou heldest thy race too dear, thyself too cheap;  
Honor no second place for truth can keep.<sup>43</sup>

Crawford's Esther, hearing the voices of the morning and feeling at one with God, yet understanding the necessity of the act she will regretfully perform, decides, "But still will Esther go. . . And if I die -- I die." Crawford's sense of alternatives seems very clearly defined. She chooses as her heroines and heroes persons whose decisions, although difficult, will be correct and will be carried out. One of the best examples is Katie's unwavering choice to marry Max, whatsoever fate, her father, or Alfred might throw in her path.

The influence of Longfellow seems the most evident, particularly in Crawford's production of poems with Indian themes. Crawford probably recognized that she could use the same raw material as Longfellow for she lived near the same Ojibway nation whose legends he transformed into heroic poems that made him famous. In her poem "The Wooing of Gheezis: An Indian Idyll", first printed in The Mail, Toronto, on September 18, 1874, she lifts names and characters directly from Hiawatha. Gheezis and Segwun, the sun and the spring are wed through the influence of Mudjekeewis, the west wind.<sup>44</sup> Probably she agrees with Longfellow's adaptation of the native concept of the animated world. Her rhythm differs from the pounding lines of Longfellow, one of her first published poems shows that she can adapt



a popular idiom and treat it in an original style. The Crawford world vision was solidified by then; her animated landscape again depicts a female principle of the immanent mated with a male principle of action to recreate the spring each year.

Other images prominent in both Hiawatha and the Crawford lyrics are the canoe, and the war-eagle attending Hiawatha, similar to the eagle attending Gisli.<sup>47</sup> The important element in the study of Crawford is her eclectic use of sources which combine to make a product uniquely her own.

Crawford also was interested in philosophical dialogues upon the rapidly changing society in which she lived. The poem "The King's Garments" opens with quotes from Robert Dale Owen and Bishop Joseph Butler which outline a theological debate on the doctrine of predestination. Both thinkers agree that deeds in this world have bearing on one's happiness in the next. Owen, the utopian socialist looks toward the influence of good, causing happiness; Bishop Butler in his battle against deism, suggests that vice will be punished. Crawford launches the tale of a king who wants to know what he will wear in Paradise. The seer, commanded to prophesy, conjures up a vision composed of images of the weaving of the king's future garments which will be characteristic of his earthly career of battle and murder. Crawford, using her common "loom" image to acknowledge meaning of every small action on the universe concludes,

For Law immutable hath one decree,  
     'No deed of good, no deed of ill can die;  
 All must ascend into my loom and be  
     Woven for man in lasting tapestry,  
 Each soul his own!<sup>46</sup>

Crawford, all at once accepts the eternal good, the infinity of the smallest act and the unerring punishment of evil in the world. She uses philosophical phrases to launch a debate that will revolve in the Crawford vision of the world she lives in, the world she would like to live in and the world she senses all about her.

The Peterborough area has produced a large number of creative women, among them the diarists Anne Langton, Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill. The sculptor Katharine E. Wallis reputedly "knew her [Crawford] intimately."<sup>47</sup> I find this unlikely, since Wallis was born in 1860 and Crawford left the Peterborough area in 1876, when Wallis would have been sixteen, and ten years her junior. Crawford certainly knew the work of Traill, and as I suggested earlier, may have been unconsciously influenced by her botanical descriptions as well as by the plants she saw in the same locale. However, Crawford's relationship to the landscape is totally harmonic in contrast to Traill's tentative involvement with the new that is always touched with nostalgia for the old.

At times Crawford is associated with Leprohon (Rosanna Eleanor Mullins).<sup>48</sup> Leprohon operated with the same eclecticism as Crawford, although she particularly wished to show the union of the Anglophone and Francophone cultures in Québec. More likely she and Crawford share outlooks in the novel form rather than in the poetic, although they have both written verse with similar titles and themes.

Music was one of Crawford's primary interests. Livesay shows evidence of her early musical training and suggests links between Crawford's

style and opera.<sup>49</sup> Certainly, her most important narrative poems, "Malcolm's Katie": and "The Hunters Twain" are operatic in their sense of the subordination of time and space to the emotional needs of the characters. Recitativo and aria both contribute to the listener's knowledge of what is occurring in Italian opera, as descriptive narrative and lyric do in "Malcolm's Katie". Forms alternate to provide the foundation necessary to the ongoing action, a dynamic form of realism in art. A copy of a song "Her bright smile haunts me still" exists in manuscript. The musical notations which accompany it seem to be in Crawford's hand.

Restrictive Victorian training, both secular and religious, is known to have stronger influence on the life of a woman than on a man. What is considered creative for a man is often considered neurotic for a woman.<sup>50</sup> Although Crawford entered the male publishing milieu, biographical studies show she maintained the extreme reserve proper to her sex. In politics and in mores, the only real influence to change from an institutionalized view of the world is the exposure to an alternative. It seems that an alternative was there for Crawford in her imagination, but never in the loneliness, and colonial isolation of her day-to-day life.

In looking at Crawford's mysterious life it is important to see her as part of an aggregate; as a member of a family, as a woman who attempted to do something unusual and difficult. One help in the study of the Crawford biography are the facts of the lives of women who lived like her in a time like hers. Within the Crawford family, it seems the three surviving women all wrote. A few of Emma Naomi Crawford's short stories remain. It is also likely that Sydney Scott Crawford, Valancy Crawford's

mother, also wrote creatively. A notebook, covered with blue marbled cardboard, is catalogued with Valancy Crawford's papers, since it bears her signature in a schoolgirl hand. However it also includes handwriting lessons given to her brother Stephen Walter. As can be seen in the facsimile in Appendix D, the teacher's model line bears little resemblance to Valancy's hand or to Emma Naomi's, which is similar to both Valancy's and Stephen Walter's. I assume the writing teacher to be their mother and suggest comparison with the script of the remainder of the notebook, two other large sections of manuscript and several fragments.<sup>51</sup> Marginal notes indicate they are connected, a glance at the handwriting will show that the process of deciphering the closely-written pages will be arduous, especially those written in pencil. They may be fiction or biographical accounts of the Crawford family history. If they are the work of Crawford's mother, they reveal the existence of a literary colleague for the lonely Crawford in Toronto. While Crawford may have had friends in Peterborough as Martin and Livesay suggest, there is little mention of any persons closer to the Crawfords than landladies or publishers in Toronto. Probably, as Daniells states, Crawford was peripherally around the Toronto colleges, although there is again no record of any personal contacts.<sup>52</sup> Reaney suggests her cosmological vision would have increased in depth and power had there been a response from an informed reading public.<sup>53</sup>

However, it must not be forgotten that no correspondence exists on the subject of Crawford's politics or personal life. Even the letter she is alleged to have received from Tennyson is no longer extant.<sup>54</sup> Certainly letters or papers showing unorthodox political or sexual views

would have been culled from her papers and destroyed upon her death. Such censorship was the norm for any writer of her day, and certainly would have been practised upon the only scion of a genteel family which had fallen upon hard times.

## CHAPTER III

Although Crawford's personal life must have been riddled with ups and downs, she seems to have envisioned a unity to it all long enough to write extremely cohesive narratives that resolve the contradictions presented in them. The short poem "Love and Reason", first known to have been published in Garvin's 1905 edition although it appears to have been composed quite early<sup>1</sup> points a direction to the narratives. The poem lacks much of the vividness of phrasing that characterizes Crawford's best work, but the moral and the title convey a glimpse of Crawford's philosophy.

The garden she presents here contains formal bowers, fawn, peacocks, "laurel, bay and myrtle" reminiscent of the kind of very civilised old world garden of "The Waterlily" and "Wava". Reason herself is personified as a

. . . calm, majestic maid,  
Thro' bosky gloom of garden strayed  
A garden planned in every part  
To please the mind and scarce the heart.

Reason has banished Nature from the garden,

And in that cold and formal school  
No flower dare bloom except by rule.

Cupid, as a particular, very active, personification of Love alighted in the garden one day. As Reason raised her hand to "crush the fay", Jove intervenes with the transforming command:

Thy hand restrain, great nymph divine;  
As thou henceforth to men would shine  
In all thy beauties known and blest,  
Take Love and bear him in thy breast:  
And thy sage counsel him restrain,  
And so let Love with Reason reign!

Love empowers the continuation of nature, the force hampered in this formal Mediterranean garden. Reason is static, as is evidenced in the line "where Summer kisses Summer's lips". The force of Summer is entrapped in the innocence of maiden Reason and needs the intervention of Love to move on to the next season. The theme persists in Crawford's work, although both style and content change with Crawford's transition to maturity. Her mature techniques involve two important uses of imagery: one that illustrates change, moves the action forward, and acts as part of the narrative, and one that freezes the action, a "stop-motion" that imprints a heraldic type of image compressing an entire landscape. Crawford's mature use of personification grows in scope to achieve the quality of myth; the landscape is embodied with spirits of place who have great power to act upon the world. But the most unusual Crawford technique is her use of narrative, very different from theme or plot, which allows her to present action that is coherent on a naturalistic human plane, if always seen correlatively with its backdrop of nature and a plane beyond time and space. Crawford's poetics also involves her statements upon the nature of reality. In her later narratives, she elaborated upon her first propositions that the power of physical work must be accompanied by the power of love in order to change the world; that this change is linked to cyclic seasonal change and, perhaps causes it; that women usually embody the magical power that co-operates with the physical acts of men as both work toward new civilizations; that any opposition can be overcome (the dark forces are usually wrapped in animal images and have a much lower order in the schema); that the outlook is essentially good for continuing innovation and growth. Both content and the techniques used to present it arise from Crawford's own personal

dialectic: the action of her imagination stimulated by her environments, reading, socio-economic circumstances and personal contacts. And, as we can see from "In the Breast of a Maple", Crawford's changes, like those of her landscapes, were ongoing. Had she lived, her basic metaphysical and technical framework probably would have evolved into yet newer embodiments of the forms, while the underlying principles would have remained the same.

One of the essential features of narrative is its function in the act of knowing. The etymology of the word "narrative" is an important indication of the precise action of its use in prose or poetry. The writer composes to let us know about events. There need not be, necessarily, limitations of time and space, three-dimensional reality, or logical sequence. Crawford composed stories that moved from one landscape to another, from one level of existence to another. All planes are accessible to human experience, if only through the power of imagination. It is possible to imagine being very small, being able to walk under the daisies like Titania and Oberon. It is possible to imagine being a cowboy controlling a stampede. Most of the persons who find Crawford's reproduction of the Western dialect the most important function of "Old Spookses' Pass" probably never had heard an actual cowboy speak. They imagined they did because Crawford did or imagined she did, and because she explained the framework of the world in which they all lived, a place where things might not go well because the absence of civilization had allowed the forces of evil to pile up in the prairie before the canyon.



Narrative functions differently from plot. Again, etymology points the direction toward a brief definition for the word "plot" derives, in its deepest origins, from the word "plane". Plot is one-dimensional and tied in linear fashion to cause and effect. The reader does not know of any events beyond those presented in a logical closed system. Narrative, however, is open-ended. Several planes of being can be included; the author need not be tied to conventions of time and space but can move action to dimensions beyond those of apparent reality, forcing along the imagination of the reader or listener.

Poetic narrative adds yet another dimension to the kind of structure employed to present the story. Poetic devices were combined with narrative in the earliest of bardic works, intended to be sung rather than printed. Crawford adapts these techniques in the nineteenth century, using many traditional means to add bardic undertones and overtones to the central action. I will leave a discussion of the auditory elements to an analysis of a specific passage from "Malcolm's Katie". However, in both "Gisli, the Chieftain" and "Malcolm's Katie" the classic elements of dream, prophecy, alliterative verse, digressive speeches which delay action or thrust it forward, and characterisation based on nobility and dignity are included.

Even within the stricture of the prose idiom, Crawford manages to create an open-structured narrative that allows the reader to project the events of the story on to levels that mere plot would prohibit. I include "In the Breast of a Maple", a short story, within this chapter, because Crawford here shows clearly her own distinction between plot and narrative, as well as showing the philosophical concerns that occupied her shortly before she died.

Crawford maintained her premise of the catalytic effect of love upon the dialectic of organizing principles in the three works studied in this chapter, which are representative of the forms of narrative she adopted. In "Gisli, the Chieftain", the love between father and son, presented in saga form, will brush aside the veil from the workings of the entire universe. In "Malcolm's Katie", an extremely complex narrative poem, love is the undeniable force that will cause the change of the seasons and the acceleration of civilisation between one generation and the next on the Canadian land. In "In the Breast of a Maple", a short story with a Canadian setting, the love between father and daughter causes the daughter to chop down a tree and discover the key to her legal ownership of the land she stands on.

## i

"Gisli, the Chieftain", one of Isabella Valancy Crawford's major poetic achievements, contains a direct enunciation of a metaphysics implicit in most of her early short stories and most of her poetry. Within a narrative framework, she employs imagery of the cycle of the seasons as well as imagery that telescopes a landscape; a mythological backdrop (this time, Norse) that derives from the Canadian landscape, her reading and her imagination, and a lyric, commonly called "The Song of the Arrow". All elements lead toward the final passage where the presence of God is affirmed through the dialectic of good and evil in the world. The poem also provides a glimpse into Crawford's use of source material and her interpretation of pagan myth through Christian myth.

In "Gisli", Crawford deviates from her usual pattern of creative relationships. Instead of love and work carrying on the process of growth in the world, there is a struggle between good (the goddess Lada, who brings spring to the world) and evil (Gisli, the semi-divine hero, who strays from the same task). The counter-force is absorbed into the process of goodness, as Lada works on her own, and Gisli is absorbed into the heart of the man whose wife he steals:

Said the voice of Evil to the ear of Good,  
 "Clasp thou my strong right hand,  
 Nor shall our clasp be known or understood  
 By any in the land,

"I, the dark giant, rule strong on the earth;  
 Yet thou, bright one, and I  
 Sprang from the one great mystery - at one birth  
 We looked upon the sky.

(p. 190)

Unlike many of her poems first published in Toronto newspapers, "Gisli" first saw print in Crawford's own edition of 1884. John Garvin republished it in 1905, with editorial changes, mostly changes in capitalization which dilute the more unorthodox sentiments and visionary dimensions of the poem. He substituted 'gods' for 'Gods', 'suns' for 'Suns'. He revised some awkward lines by inverting subject and predicate, and exchanged many of Crawford's excited exclamation points for periods. Probably he did not work with her manuscript; because of her poverty, Crawford often used the verso of published pieces as fresh paper for new work. However, it is possible, since the manuscript is not among Crawford's papers in any form, that Garvin lost it or gave it away. References to the Crawford manuscripts in Garvin's letters show his first concern as an editor was monetary. One

of the most interesting of Garvin's letters to Lorne Pierce shows the financial base for his interest in Crawford:

The reason I am holding fast to Miss Crawford's manuscripts is this: I have long intended publishing a volume of her prose writings. This will probably be done within three years from date . . . There may be another reason that has not clearly asserted itself. Some Canadian university may offer me a Litt.D. and if so I should like to present that university Miss Crawford's manuscript and other treasures I possess . . . about 7 years ago I was offered a Litt.D. by a university in Nova Scotia but stupidly refused it as I thought my own Alma Mater should recognize the work I had done and was doing for Canadian Literature.<sup>2</sup>

Garvin died before producing the prose edition and before receiving any Litt.D. Apparently he was passed by posthumously as well. However, the point to be made is that between the years 1902, when he gained possession of the papers and his death in 1935, anything might have happened to the "Gisli" manuscript or any other Crawford manuscript. The remains of the Crawford papers were bought by Lorne Pierce from Katherine Hale (Mrs. John W. Garvin) in 1936.

Crawford clearly drew forms and ideas from her reading of the Norse Sagas. Two "Gisli" stories would have been available to her, although study of both sources in comparison to the Crawford poem shows that they merely inform her invention rather than serve as models for it. However, she adhered rather closely to the literary conventions of the saga form; an examination of the Sagas and Eddas provides an insight into Crawford's method of processing the data available to her imagination.

Gísla Saga, discussed in Andersson's The Icelandic Family Saga<sup>3</sup> has few resemblances in plot to "Gisli the Chieftain". The Norse Gisli

lives a life of family conflict and treachery, but never steals another's wife. His magic spear, Grasiða has a counterpart in Gisli's bud-tipped spear in Crawford's poem, but Grasiða is used as a weapon, while Gisli kills his foe with an arrow. However, the Gísla Saga mentions Hel-shoes, which were tied to the feet of Vesteinna, Gisli's wife's brother, slain by Þorgrimr, Gisli's sister's husband and enemy. This seems to be the only mention of Hel-shoes in any saga<sup>4</sup>, and is an important indication that Crawford may have read Gísla Saga at one time.

A Christian court poem of the twelfth century, "Geisli" by Einar Scurlason, is a possible source of the name of the hero and the Christian context. The poem tells of the miracle of St. Olaf; in fact, the title "Geisli" is the Icelandic word for 'saint'.<sup>5</sup> The opening lines of "Geisli" attest the trinity of God, a Christian touch which would save the listener from confusion with pagan dualism. Both "Geisli" and Gísla Saga would have been available to Crawford in 1884, as they both appeared in Vigfusson's Corpus Poeticum Boreale in 1883. Although the name Gisli probably derived from here, Crawford's love of Norse myth more likely began with Toronto productions of Wagner operas, such as The Ring Cycle, and more popular books on the subject, such as the Eddas. Also, "Gisli" would have been the Christian name of many of the Icelandic immigrants who flocked to Canada in the late nineteenth century.

Sagas, almost without exception, follow the same thematic pattern. A long genealogy of the main character introduces him. Crawford deviates here; Gisli appears already at work. She makes no mention of the other protagonist, the nameless hero whom Gisli kills. She does introduce the

goddess Lada; it is between her and Gisli that the most important conflict occurs. In all sagas, a conflict builds to a climax, usually violent, Crawford follows this pattern, but omits the next element, revenge for the death of the slain. Instead she moves to a reconciliation, proper to the Norse structure.

Crawford adopts several of the narrative devices of the sagas, episodes build to a climax which occurs about the middle of the poem. Each character or force is introduced separately and moves toward an inexorable fate. There are no surprises in a saga. The poet retards the climax, so that the listener can more fully understand the reason for the tragedy. Crawford does this with "The Song of the Arrow", just before Gisli's arrow meets with Brynhild's arrow in the breast of the eagle. This dramatic staging decelerates the pace and magnifies detail; it is a "dwelling on incidentals in order to focus the central event one last time".<sup>6</sup> Crawford also uses the device of necrology, speaking of the hero after his death. But she defies the convention of letting the story stand without commentary, and describes the journey of the soul itself.

"Gisli, the Chieftain" fulfills enough saga conventions, both of form and content, to be termed a saga, a particular type of narrative that can resolve the contradiction between the pagan and the Christian, the earthly and the supernatural, the force of the heroic and the force of evil that undermines the hero. However, Crawford adds what suits her main point and disregards any irrelevant tradition. She creates a new story and transposes old characters into it, for the sense of a world in elemental conflict.

As the poem begins, all the world is bright. A battle has been won, by Gisli, whose galleys "with bruised breasts triumphant" ride on the bay. In the banquet hall, "Bards . . . set in loud verse Gisli's fame". The immediacy of the gods and the heroes is plain here: "On their lips the war gods laid/Fire to chant their warrior's name". It is the spring of an earth year, but in a place where both the gods and the heroes battle winter so that spring can come. Gisli carries a sign of his kinship with the gods, his spear, bound like a Tarot wand, with the buds of spring.

Gisli prays to Lada for the completion of his happiness. His song, the brainchild of Victory and mead, is for a wife:

Now, O Lada, mate the flesh;  
 Mate the fire and flame of life;  
 Tho' the soul go still unwed,  
 Give the flesh its fitting wife.  
 . . . . .  
 Give the flesh its fitting mate -  
 Life is strong and life is sweet!  
 . . . . .  
 Thus a man joys in his life -  
 Nought of the Beyond knows he.

In a setting where the Beyond seems intimately connected to the lives of men, it is a curious prayer. Gisli proudly denies the god-like part of his nature, an affront to the goddess with whom he brings the life-giving spring every year. Lada weaves, like Frigga, and represents the spring, like Freya.<sup>7</sup> But Lada is not in the Norse pantheon like the other supernatural persons in the poem. There is a Russian spring goddess called Lada. The use of this name is typical of Crawford's adaptation of mythology. She is not a scholarly poet who strives for complete accuracy in all detail. Her accuracy is of another type, that uses the basics of old stories to create new ones.

The appearance of Lada in a Norse setting is not a mistake, since the themes make sense and further the movement of the tale she tells us. She borrows a goddess, who brings spring to another ice-locked land.

Lada's work is carefully described. She creates a tapestry with her "mystic distaff". While Gisli beseeches her for a wife, Lada weaves all the "ice-locked fires" of the icebergs, "yellow flames from crater lips/ Long flames from the waking sun", "all the subtle fires of earth", "warp and weft of Flame". A peculiar sort of imagery occurs here and throughout the poem:

Dim and green with tender grass;  
Blew on ice-fields with withered mouth;  
Blew on lover's hearts and lured  
White swans from the blue-arched south.

Crawford's use of color freezes the action, like a still photograph, like a crest that repeats the story of generations in one succinct image. This is typical of her imagery, which might be designated 'heraldic'. Crawford announces a scene, like a herald, and presents it with a "sense of orderliness and telegraphic concision".<sup>8</sup>

In part II of the poem, Gisli concurs with the goddess in the dispulsion of the mist. Again the female principle operates on a supernatural plane; the male on a semi-supernatural. Gisli walks toward the sun; his "shade like a dusky god striding behind". The rhythm of Gisli's walk, rapid, but firm and unrelenting, is echoed in the metre of the lines, changed from the calmer rhythm associated with Lada in the opening part. Gisli, the godlike human, works in a different way than the goddess, who



wove with earth's fires, her attribute. Gisli's tool is the wind, a powerful galley riding from the west. The mist surrounds him, impairs his eyesight and his vision. It is described as "woman-lipped"; "the soul with it cloys as the tongue cloys with mead! The female sexual imagery appears frequently in Crawford, although usually not in such a misogynist context. This interplay of the forces of fire and mist is true to the Norse mythology Crawford derived it from:

In the beginning, there was but a Yawning Gap. In the north, then, the frigid Mist-World appeared, in the midst of which there was a well from which the world rivers flowed. In the south appeared a world of heat, glowing, burning and impassable to such as have not their holdings there.<sup>9</sup>

The fiery clouds from the south turned the frost to mist.<sup>10</sup>

The introduction of Gylfag, Gisli's "true hound", adds another Norse echo to the story, as well as another example of Crawford's association of animals with dark forces. The Gylfaginning forms the first section of the Poetic Edda, but there is no red dog of that name in any myth I have been able to find. Gylfag is involved in another of the heraldic images; Gisli urges the wind to chase the mist "As Gylfag, my hound, lays his fangs in the flank/ Of a grey wolf, shadowy, leather-thewed, lank, . . ." an image true to the devices of any knight's shield. Images of war surround Gisli; the wolf, "the shafts of the sun", "hissing oars". He identifies with the eagle, another beast of war: "The sharp gaze of day give the eagles and me".<sup>11</sup>

In Part III, the mists of winter are dispelled; the hero laughs at his triumph. The eagle begins his search for food, at one with the wind

and the gods:

Unfurled to the northward and southward  
 His wings broke the air, and to eastward  
 His breast gave its iron; and godward  
 Pierced the shrill voice of his hunger.

The eagle soars in the gyre-like pattern, in which Crawford believes all the universe to move.<sup>12</sup> Another terse stanza catches the eagle in the colors of his flight, again, a heraldic image.

Black in the sharp blue of the north sky,  
 Black over the white of the tall cliffs,  
 Black over the arrow of Gisli.

"The Song of the Arrow", inserted here belongs with the songs of the canoe, the axe and the lily bed in lyric quality. Crawford used personification to switch focus from her human characters, to stop the action, so that the reader can observe the actions taking place on the plane of causality:

What know I  
 Of the will of the tense bow from which I fly?  
 . . . . . The gods know best.

The arrow shoots through a world that is like a living body, e.g. "As I bite through the veins of the throbbing sky." In itself it is an accident; it came from a bow moved by a hand over which the bow has no control. Even the person who pulls the bowstring may not be fully aware of the consequences of his act; just as Gisli was not aware of the consequences when he prayed his drunken and arrogant prayer to Lada, for a mate other than her.

The climax follows. As the eagle's hypnotic gaze pierces the breast of the cygnet he is about to kill, the arrow of Gisli strikes his

breast and meets the arrow of Brynhild. This is the first mention of the woman Gisli has asked Lada to find for him. She is not characterized because she is only a pawn in a poem about a hero trying to defy the right order of events.

The final section of the narrative changes the setting to Hell Way, where the consequences of Gisli's action can be understood as his victim toils toward the Hall of the Blest. The journey is of Sisyphean proportion. The mists have returned, the ghost reaches the top of a peak only to fall into an abyss before another "perdurable" peak. He wears Hell Shoes, so he can walk to Valhalla. It could go on forever, except for the redemptive force of the father's love for his youngest son. Perhaps the father-figure derives from Crawford's reading about Bragi who welcomed souls as they entered Valhalla and is represented as a fully-armed, but kind old man with a long beard.<sup>13</sup>

This Hell Way is the realm of the traveller between the worlds. It is way out in space, where the whole terrifying panorama of life and death is visible to the ghost:

Grouped worlds, eternal eagles flew:  
Swift comets fell like noiseless dew;  
Young earths slow budded in the blue.

In Norse myth, an eagle sits on the top of the world tree, the Ash Yggdrasil. In Crawford's poetry, this world is one of many, and the imagery carries the meaning of the death of a world with the death of a man. As Odin, referred to as a world-maker ("Ere stars from Odin's hand were tossed") is the god of wind who clears the winter mists away, so, paradoxically, he demands victims, who have the blood-eagle, his symbol, carved on their backs.<sup>14</sup> Gisli,

wanting a mate, paradoxically finds a victim as well.

Viewless the cord which draws from far,  
To the round sun, some mighty star;  
Viewless the strong-knit soul cords are.

As above, so below.

The love of the father for the Son dissolves the mists, levels the peak and clarifies for the son what has happened to him. The action of the father also clarifies the cosmos:

The warrior blew a long clear blast  
Like frightened wolves the mists flowed past

.....

And at its blast blew all the day  
In broad winds across the awful way;  
Sun smote at sun across the gray.

The worlds meet as the arrows met in the breast of the eagle. This dead hero is the eagle, who, like Odin, and like Christ, becomes a sacrifice to himself, "his self to his Self".<sup>15</sup> His story is simple. He loved his wife Bryhild, whom he kept captive. While he was at sea and still locked in the domain of winter, Gisli and Bryhild fell in love. The illicit love, Gisli's arrow, killed him, yet opened the way for the licit love of father and son to bring him to Valhalla.

Crawford's views good and evil as dialectical forces in this poem. They are constantly in action, veiling the mystery of God, although ultimately controlled by him. The entire narrative leads to the closing dialogue, verging on Manicheism, but still affirming the Christian dogma that one god, the All-Worker, produced both. Mankind in the mists sees

evil as apart from God and identifies it as the enemy. The essence of the ultimate mystery that Crawford shows the traveller on the Hell Way is the fact of mystery: "The benison - 'Ye shall not know!'"

The gyre-like movement throughout "Gisli, the Chieftain", the dialectic between fire and mist, Gisli and Lada, the arrow and the eagle, knowledge and omniscience, good and evil resembles the imagery and the action of Crawford's stories and other important poems. Her narrative here borrows from the saga form. It is tightly constructed, and conveys a concise account of the strength of the world-forming force in enveloping the evil which is a part of its nature.

ii

"Malcolm's Katie" is generally considered the epitome of nineteenth century Canadian poetry and Isabella Valancy Crawford's prime poetic achievement. Even the most conservative of early critics, who found "Old Spookses' Pass" too earthily Canadian, saw "Malcolm's Katie" as blending quite properly current poetic conventions and nationalist sentiment.<sup>16</sup> Considered in relation to Crawford's early stories and other published poems, "Malcolm's Katie" represents a culmination of her best poetic tendencies: the mythologised landscape, the philosophical subtext on the power of love to overcome forces opposed to it; the lyrics, like those of "Wava", which summarize a whole section of narrative drama. An important innovation to be discussed is the Canadian context, which operates on many levels. The characters are Canadian persons, the scene a Canadian scene, without apology

that it is Canadian. Crawford's approach to Canadian history is epic in quality. The old world, moved from Scotland, has matured into a first generation Canadian civilization that, in turn, will give rise to another.

One criticism of "Malcolm's Katie" holds that the poem possesses a "creaking plot" that stretches the recognised vagaries of fate to melodramatic proportions.<sup>17</sup> The coincidences of Alfred's finding Max in the woods, the tree falling on Max at the moment of his appeal to Heaven for a sign, the sudden return of Max to save Katie and Alfred from the murder-suicide Alfred intends, are usually considered to be merely Crawford's manipulation of natural possibilities to illustrate a trite theme that love conquers all. Crawford does create a parable about the efficacy of love, but her coincidences are plausible if the reader accepts her thesis that the world is self-forming both for the individual and for an aggregate of individuals, and accepts her complexly structured narrative that informs the reader of activity on all levels at all times.

Some of the directions which I follow in this discussion of "Malcolm's Katie" have been suggested by other critics. Reaney points out Crawford's systematised vision which bears close links to Dante and Blake, and cites the importance of her narrative structure, although he does not follow through his insight with an accurate interpretation of the content of Crawford's poetry.<sup>18</sup> Dorothy Livesay, in her article on the Canadian documentary poem, reveals the structure of Max and Katie's tasks as "love and hard work, working in unison".<sup>19</sup> Finally, Frank Bessai analyses the main characters of the poem in mythic terms:

On the simplest level, Max stands for the life-affirming myth of progress which must inform a healthy pioneer society, set in opposition to Alfred as the life-denying world-historical principle of decadence and decay. Thus, also, Alfred has no wish to be a builder, but is content to inherit the work of others. Malcolm may be described as representing the pioneering movement of progress run down to a point halfway between the positions of Max and Alfred. He had been a pioneer, he is now content to hold - and in a bourgeois way to value - what he has. Into this larger historical tension Crawford inserts the more specifically human and personal principle of love. It is, of course, created in Katie.<sup>20</sup>

I will develop these points within the exegesis of the poem.

Since action in "Malcolm's Katie" takes place on natural and super-natural levels, both the characters and the landscape have the power to transform and be transformed. The principles of magical and physical action combine in the poem as they did in the fairystories. Love, by Katie, and work, by Max carry civilization onward here as they carried on the rescue of Roseblush in "The Waterlily" and the reunion of Goldie and her mother in "Wava, the Fairy of the Shell". Complete naturalism is not intended or attempted. Crawford's concern is never "What happened?", but "How did it happen?"; not "Will Max arrive on time?" but "How will love conquer?". Crawford announces this in her full title "Malcolm's Katie": "A Love Story". The entire poem acts as an explication of Crawford's definition of love: it is the force that resolves the contradictions and has the power to overcome problems in time and space. As a focal point for my discussion of "Malcolm's Katie", I will use the propositions of the early fairy stories and show their continuation into her mature work. This should present new ideas about Crawford's poetic, particularly about her use of narrative.

At the beginning, Crawford shows the operating policies of her world in a carefully composed scene where the lovers, Max and Katie, adrift in a canoe, pledge their love and discuss the reason for the opposition of Katie's father, Malcolm, to the match. Part II moves the action from the pond to the macrocosm of the change of season in the entire country and shows Max at work in the forest. Part III shows Katie's parallel work on the old homestead, and introduces an antagonist suitor, Alfred, who is similar to Max in strength, and Katie, in cultivation. However, he desires Katie for the wrong reason: the continuation of the old civilization, rather than the creation of a new one. Part IV returns the action to the forest, where the North Wind puts the death-blow to Indian Summer, and Alfred meets Max, resulting in a similar blow to Max's fantasies. Part V shows Katie's continued trial to withstand the barrage of doubts about Max that Alfred casts at her. Part VI brings together all the major elements of the poem in the climatic action of Alfred's attempt to drown himself and Katie and Max's rescue of them both. Love empowers the transformation of each person, and of their lives together. The brief Part VII depicts the convergence of all in the achievement of the new civilisation, an Eden fairer than Eden, in Canada.

In Part I, through the process of the introduction of the characters, Crawford delineates the problem she will solve. Like most of Crawford's characters, Max, Katie, and Malcolm are given attributes from nature to embellish their identities. Max is the soldier of the axe; Katie is a rose; Malcolm, the father, is a rock. While these two male characters are at times stereotypic in their qualities, Katie, the rose, is not. She asserts that the kind of rose she is will set a deep root, imbued with the magical



power of the mandrake, that would only give up its place shrieking, a sight and sound unfit for humans. The rose is accorded the magical power which will allow its permanent implantation in the garden of Max's heart.

Kate and Max, the lovers, paddle their canoe in a pool covered with the globes of waterlilies. Katie's face is the rose reflected in the water between the lilies separated by the canoe. It is

A seed of love to cleave into a rock  
And bourgeon thence until the granite splits  
Before its subtle strength.<sup>21</sup>

It is unlikely that Crawford used images for symbolic representation; however, the images of the rose and the waterlily recur in such a way here as to suggest symbolic use. From the contexts of these flowers in the gardens of the fairy tales, the association of the rose is with cultivation and higher forms of civilization, while the waterlily is found in the centre of a newly discovered country pond. Roses, of course, are emblematically related to England. In "Malcolm's Katie", the heroine seems to be an amalgam of the rose and the waterlily, the personification of the cultivation of England in the barely-civilized garden of Canada. Livesay has repeated the suggestion that Katie symbolises Canada.<sup>22</sup> This is only partly true, since it will be seen that Katie alone cannot carry on the process of the growth of further-ranging civilizations, that the power of the cultivation of the first generation of immigrants must be coupled with the vigor of the next. The dominant quality Katie possesses is the power of her sexuality to overcome obstacles of hard work, short-sighted fatherly concern, and treachery. She has the power to cleave the granite of her father's Scottish heart; to convince him of Max's worth she will " . . . kiss him and keep still; that way is sure".

The ring that Max has created kabbalistically twines the letters "K" for "Katie" and "M" for "Max". The "M" might be for "Malcolm" as well, since Katie's life is always intertwined with one or the other. The daughter is passed from the father to the husband, and transmits the flower of the old culture to the new (could Crawford have been thinking of her cultured mother?). What Crawford describes in Katie is not female passivity in a patriarchal system but the active force through which Katie causes her transfer from her father, whom she loves, to Max, whom she also loves.

Katie's father, Malcolm, is attributed qualities of an Old Testament patriarch, a mythological identity important in the light of the new Eden Max and Katie create after their tasks are accomplished. His barns are "Leviathans rising from red seas of grain", his flocks have "golden fleeces", his herds have lead bulls as valuable and beautiful as the golden "calf Aaron called from the furnace". Malcolm is like a bull if angered;

. . . why, he will rage  
 And fume and anger, striding o'er his fields,  
 Until the last bought king of herds lets down  
 His lordly front, and rumbling thunder from  
 His polish'd chest, returns his chiding tones.

Anger, a dark force when directed toward Max and Katie, is represented by an animal image. Malcolm's ploughs, "like Genii chain'd" have grown to huge dimension now, so much more powerful than the ploughs he and his brother Reuben pulled through their first fields. Max, as Malcolm worked, must work again to achieve the personal magnitude worthy of Katie's heritage. The first product of his work, the coin from which the engagement ring is wrought begins the narrative, "Max placed a ring on little Katie's hand". The story will be about his work to match Malcolm's earthly organization, and Katie's

embodiment of its heritage. Both men represent the land: Malcolm, the completed homestead; Max, the forests of the future homestead. As in the early stories, a character is what he or she sees.

Crawford's poetic technique combines tradition and innovation.

The interlock of the 'K' and 'M' on the ring Max presents Katie is kabbalistic in spirit but not in symbol. The Old Testament images and figures associated with Malcolm echo the Bible but there are no specific symbolic associations to the references. Crawford seems more interested in the sonorities of the words as they add depth to the poem, and mixes her references quite freely, a further illustration of her eclectic and bardic narrative voice.

The physical landscape predominates in Part I of the poem, although there are glimpses of the mythologized landscape that appears in more detail later on. The panorama of Canadian civilization from the first ploughing through the growth of the towns through the hardship of the second generation of settler informs us of the economics of Canadian life, the function of "Malcolm's Katie" on the human epic level. Crawford probably knew well the distinction between the homesteader of the 1860's and the "landed immigrant" of the 1760s. Of course, for Crawford, civilization must occur in each individual as well as in the land itself. Speaking of Malcolm, Max contrasts the first settler's magnificent acreage with the homestead he first would have worked:

. . . I heard him tell  
 How the first field upon his farm was ploughed  
 He and his brother Reuben, stalwart lads,  
 Yoked themselves, side by side, to the new plough;  
 Their weaker father in the grey of life -  
 (But rather the wan age of poverty,  
 Than many winters), in large gnarl'd hands  
 The plunging handles held; with mighty strains  
 They drew the ripping beak through the knotted sod,  
 Thro' tortuous lanes of blackened, smoking stumps;  
 And past great flaming brush heaps, sending out  
 Fierce summers, beating on their swollen brows.

Malcolm has undergone the same trial with the land that Max must undergo. The brother Reuben seems chosen for the sound of his name, the subtonal link to the Old Testament patriarchs. They are Titans, with the physical power of oxen; even their aged father has superhuman strength and "large, gnarl'd hands". This tale has acquired an edge of grotesque exaggeration as the comfortable Malcolm has told it a generation later. It is as extreme as the imagery surrounding it: the ripping beak of the plow (similar to Crawford's imagery of carrion birds, related to dark forces, as the eagle in "Gisli" or the "beaks of unclean crows" who make a false display of grief in "The Mother's Soul"). The collective imagery of "beaks", "tortuous", "blackened", "smoking" and "fierce summers" prefigures some of Max's illusions during his own struggle with the wilderness. His own burning brush heaps will hide the Sun and cause him to become enraptured with his own vision of the impossible instant perfection of the new homestead. The "fierce summers" image also foreshadows the kind of stasis of the "pulseless forest" of summer, described in detail in Part II.

Here in Part I, Crawford also introduces the struggle on an epic human level. As she reiterates all through the poem, the push toward the

new civilisation is not Max and Katie's alone, but also that of the myriad immigrants to the new world, and the newer world beyond that of the first immigrant civilisations in Canada. The rewards for successful battle with the land seem small to Max; this is his illusion which must be changed before a new order can be formed.

"Inglorious? aye! They make no promises  
 Of Star or Garter, or the thundering guns  
 That tell the earth her warriors are dead.  
 Inglorious? aye, the battle done and won  
 Means not - a throne propped up with bleaching bones;  
 A country sav'd with smoking seas of blood;  
 A flag torn from the foe with wounds and death;  
 Or Commerce, with her housewife foot upon  
 Colossal bridge of slaughtered savages;  
 The Cross laid on her brawny shoulder, and  
 In one sly mighty hand her reeking sword;  
 And in the other all the woven cheats  
 From her dishonest looms.

The order of the old world in the new is wrapped in images of the inanimate and static: the "Star and Garter", "guns", "throne", "country", "flag", and "bridge of slaughtered savages". Crawford may be speaking of the original conquest of the Americas, although, as can be seen from her topical poetry, she is blind to the continuing conquest of the native people that is ongoing in her day, and yet in ours. Commerce, the housewife, has become the primary mover of action in the *οικος* rather than love. She weaves all into the corruption of the social fabric, one of Crawford's favorite themes, reminiscent in imagery to the Greek and Norse myths she loves, but adapted from its traditional symbolism to its new usage.

Max's battle will be different, for those battles around the old values have all been fought. The homesteads are smaller now, and the man with

the axe performing the same work will have only:

. . . four walls, perhaps a lowly roof;  
Kine in a peaceful posture (sic); modest fields;

an acquisition which Max must learn to see as equivalent in worth to Malcolm's gigantic holdings. Crawford writes with historical accuracy about land grants and the common practice of a young woman's engagement to a young man who would go west, clear the land, build a house and return for her. The same pattern of the absent engaged man who must work to become worthy of his bride is repeated in "In the Breast of a Maple".

Parts of the manuscript of "Malcolm's Katie" are extant in the Lorne Pierce Collection. Since most of Crawford's poetic manuscripts are lost, comparison of the manuscript which appears to be a next-to-final draft, and the printed text of her 1884 edition afford important insights into Crawford's process of composition. The manuscript probably survives only because Crawford cut each sheet in two and used the verso for writing part of a novel: The Halton Boys. This work is signed "'Denis Scott'" an amalgam of her father's middle name "Dennis" and her mother's maiden surname "Scott". Clearly, she felt what she called "a prize story for boys" would attract a greater audience if apparently written by a man.<sup>23</sup> Important parts of "Malcolm's Katie", such as "The South Wind laid his moccasins aside . . ." are missing from the manuscript, but enough remains to indicate Crawford's careful editing of her work.

It is interesting that of the extant parts of the manuscript of "Malcolm's Katie", only Part I seems to have undergone extensive revision.

In the sections of Parts III, V, and VI which remain, Crawford seems to have been very clear about the direction of her narrative, and the only changes involve substitutions of individual words for ones she deemed more appropriate. Study of the changes in Part I shows the careful planning Crawford gave to the function of the character of Alfred, thus pointing the direction to the interpretation of the subtext of the poem as well as the passages relating to the concurrent change of the seasons.

Crawford always foreshadows future events early in her narrative, but study of Part I of this manuscript shows the composition and the later exclusion of two passages about Alfred, the other suitor. Crawford apparently altered the focus of her tale from the story of two rivals for one woman to the story of a man and a woman performing necessary tasks to realize their life together. Alfred becomes a character whose appreciation of old world values becomes a central ingredient to the establishment of the new civilization, although he makes every attempt to impede its progress. Crawford cut this passage, an important prefiguration of Alfred, from the extant draft of the manuscript. As Max and Katie gaze into their reflection in the pool of lilies, Max speaks:

That small rose face of yours, so dear, so fair  
[in 1884 ed.]

[in ms.] So open-loving in its crystal eyes -  
That men, ev'n those whose ways lie not with Love,  
Like blind men walking on a winter's day  
Who seek the sunlight they have never seen  
Unconsciously will seek their warmth and light.  
And one, perchance, may come, nay, will come, Kate  
Hero of the sword, or calf of the stalls  
Fat with ancestral gold - [I being gone

substituting a passage that does not appear in any extant part of the manuscript;

[That small rose face of yours, so dear, so fair]  
[in 1884 ed.]

A seed of love to cleave into a rock,  
And bourgeon thence until the granite splits  
Before its subtle strength. [I being gone . . . ]

She drastically altered this passage, in the second personification of Kate as a rose, where Max suggests what Katie might say to a future suitor:

My core was crimson and my perfume sweet [in 1884 ed.]

[in ms.] I did not know how choice a thing I was,  
And thought because I trembled in the wind  
It was the wooer of the perfect rose -  
Now comes the sun and strongly gilds my leaves,  
I feel the fateful breeze stir sweet and low  
That other wind has swept beyond my ken -

The breeze I love sighs thro' my ruddy leaves"  
[in 1884 ed.]

In the 1884 edition, the passage is printed:

My core was crimson and my perfume sweet  
I did not know how choice a thing I am,<sup>25</sup>  
I had not seen the sun, and blind I sway'd  
To a strong wind, and thought because I sway'd,  
'Twas to the wooer of the perfect rose -  
That strong, wild wind has swept beyond my ken -  
The breeze I love sighs thro' my ruddy leaves.'"

Crawford has altered the image of the rose's fading loyalty and left only one reference to the breeze, foreshadowing Alfred, in contrast to the "strong wind", Max.

The debate in Part I ends with the clear statement of the task of each lover as each wishes the other success; Katie's changing of her father's intentions for her future and Max's carving out of the homestead for them both:

God speed the kiss, said Max, and Katie sighed,  
With prayerful palms close sealed, "God speed  
the axe!"



The lyric "O light canoe where dost thou glide?" sums up the interaction of the lovers and the entire order of the world to which they belong. Crawford specifically shows the shining of the Evening Star, Venus, both on the breadth of the landscape and on the small pond where the canoe rests for a moment:

Above thee burns Eve's rosy bar;  
Below thee throbs her darling star;  
Deep 'neath thy keel her round worlds are.

This middle stanza reads differently and, I think, better in the manuscript version:

Above, below, Eve's rosy bar -  
Above, below, her darling star -  
No ripple his bright flame to mar.

The above/below parallelism reflects the stillness visually and rhythmically, as well as echoing a tenet of the hermetic tradition, "As above, so below". The identification of the reflection of Venus as specifically male reaffirms the heterosexual union implied in the narrative setting of the lyric passage. Venus, the Evening Star, acts as a focal point, essentially meditational, in the movement between two of the levels of action Crawford includes in her poem. The pause sets the tone of the next section of the poem, the section that will move the scene from the still pond to that of the praxis of seasonal change upon the entire Canadian landscape.

Part II introduces three important levels on which the narrative will continue: the seasonal, the human/epic, and the personal. Crawford wrote passages like "The South Wind laid his moccasins aside" from the depths of her transforming vision, and from the literary purpose of juxtaposing the story of a pair of lovers, the epic struggle of the

impoverished city dwellers entangled in the "loom of Commerce", with the animation of the landscape. The passage is not an indulgence in topological description that bears little relation to the central action of the narrative. The interplay of the landscape and characters makes "Malcolm's Katie" the uniquely Canadian narrative Crawford intended, rather than a story in verse with a romantic plot. The landscape is accurately portrayed; Crawford acts here as the genius loci transmitting from conscious and unconscious levels a map that can alter the dimensions of time and space, so that the process of Max and Katie's journey can be understood. As love is the reliable mechanism that transforms the vision of the lovers into reality, so the perpetuity of the processes of nature promises growth and fulfillment in each season. Reason, in the microcosm of Max and Katie's relationship, is the interplay of Max's physical labour and Katie's corresponding labour to prepare Max for their union. In the realm of the natural world, reason becomes the dialectical struggle between the forces of life and of death (which always contains the promise of rebirth), the seasonal ritual which Crawford parallels to the action on the human level, personal, interpersonal and epic levels.

The action of the "South Wind" passage occurs in the autumn, when the threat of winter death is momentarily suspended through the coming of Indian summer, the reminder of the summer that will follow, as well as the summer past. It parallels the trials Max and Katie must undergo and foreshadows their success. The passage also prefigures the "dark night of the soul" that the lovers must undergo as well as the relentless continuum of life that supports all.

The autumn comes wrapped in the ocean images and animal images one associates with the ominous in Crawford. The sets of images personify the dark forces, as in the ocean storm and the shark in "Wava". The pulsating sea of the herd on the prairie echoes the images surrounding Malcolm, who represents one kind of threat to Max and Katie's union. The water is not the kind of the pleasant localised pond, but a sea "In tumbling surfs, all yellow'd faintly thro'/With the low sun . . .". The whole autumn is a storm of change, the convulsion prior to death. The lakes in storm are "panthers" who "stretch to try their velvet limbs, and then retreat to purr and bide their time". "Great eagles, lords of naked cliffs", shriek at the man, presumably Max, who stands in the haze where clouds, mists, and confusion meet.

The image of excessive natural activity moves toward the image of the completed growth of summer:

The pulseless forest, lock'd and interlock'd  
 So closely, bough with bough, and leaf with leaf,  
 So serfed with its own wealth . . .

The forest resists the pain and experience of autumn and approaching death as a compact, ringed fortress. Max and Katie's parting statements of their love, "God speed the axe", "God speed the kiss", similarly shows their attempt to deny the human trials to be undergone before fruition can occur again. Both passages are reminiscent of the phrase from the poem "Love and Reason", where "Summer kisses Summer's lips . . ." During the absence of the south wind from the forest, storms have attacked its physical integrity; now when the South Wind returns "on moccasins of flame, the sun attacks with fire on the depths of the forest whose "dim veins beat with no life". Fire has its effect,

but too late. Indian Summer is but a brief respite from the trials of winter to come, a correspondence on the seasonal level to the action on the personal levels of Max and Katie.

Crawford personifies the season in accord with the real action of seasonal changes in Canada. In fact, the Canadian autumn occurs because the axis of the earth's rotation changes the angle of the sun's rays upon it. The violent water images of the first part parallel the electrical storms of August. There is astronomical accuracy in Crawford's positioning of the sun and moon, and in the apparent movement of the "high moons of summer" to its equinoctial position in opposition to the sun, as "two fierce red suns" appear to face each other. The view to the west of the "Moon of Falling Leaves" in the autumn morning leads to the image of the last coming of the sun to dispel the mists, which will cover the terrain in winter. The turning of the earth is suggested by the passage:

Have you killed the happy, laughing Summer?

. . . . .  
 Wrapp'd her, mocking, in a rainbow blanket,  
 Drown'd her in the frost mist of your anger?  
 She is gone a little way before me;  
 Gone an arrow's flight beyond my vision;  
 "She will turn again and come to meet me

which refers to the "mystic Indian summer" reminder that

"In the Happy Hunting Ground -  
 . . . . . all the arrows  
 "He [Manitou] has shot from his great bow of Pow'r  
 "With its clear, bright singing cord of Wisdom,  
 "'Are re-gather'd plum'd again and brightened,  
 "'And shot out, re-barbed with Love and Wisdom;  
 "'Always shot, and evermore returning.

This effective description of the cycle of the seasons and its underlying nexus of life-death-rebirth clearly portends the cycle of the maturation

of the individual, and the cycle of civilizations that reborn individuals can produce. The construct of the power of Manitou and the components of his bow, the vibration of Wisdom and its infusion from its basic source into the arrow, combined with Love, parallel the growth of Max and Katie's love as it enters its autumn, with its falsely interpreted promise of easy fruition, that parallels Indian Summer. Their love will be injected with the wisdom of experience<sup>c</sup> in its encounter with Manitou, whatever trials that encounter might bring.

The Crawford metaphor for the progression of Autumn is astrologically sound as well: as the planets move (and the sun appears to move) through the zodiacal signs, corresponding images appear in the poem. Virgo is symbolized by the innocence of Max and Katie's love, and the stasis of summer (like the calm maiden Reason); Scorpio's composite symbolism includes the eagle, while Sagittarius, the sign of the darting arrows, spells the end of autumn. It is difficult to determine if this esoteric subtext is unconscious on Crawford's part, or a conscious attempt to include yet another plane to her narrative structure. The astrological cluster of Aries, Taurus and the Gemini-like Genii chained are present in the description of Malcolm's flocks, herds and plough in Part I, as the spring of the first civilization is brought to the land. Although diffuse in structure, the sense of progression on this symbolic level seems distinctly present in the narrative.

However, the Indian mythology forms the crux of the passage. Crawford adapts Indian mythology more successfully than she does any other kind. While her personifications of the seasons as Vikings or Romans seem

literary allusions, the Indian personifications operate in a realistic manner as genius loci, the spirits of place. Crawford may have been influenced by Longfellow and the interest of the British public in North American exotica, but her use of personification here gives the landscape mythological dimension. Crawford universalizes her sense perceptions through the power of her imagination and her facility with language. She provides a link to the tradition of the native peoples, who had built up an advanced civilization millenia before Europeans had dreamed of the existence of the North American land. What happened for the Indians of the Six Nations may have happened for Crawford too, for legends that explain the nature of a place derive from the need to explain it; the need to make it known.

The movement of the entire "South Wind" episode alternately changes pace both in rhythm and image. The passage establishes Crawford's sense of the pulsation of the world that rocks with change like the tides or human breath. The in-out motion continues throughout the passage, which, in its narrative function, brings us from Malcolm's still pond to Max in the wilderness. Crawford also defies the conventional concept of linear space to draw back and present a cinematic scan of thousands of miles of Canadian landscape.

Max reappears in the passage within Part II beginning "The mighty morn strode laughing up the land". Crawford links the solitary figure in the forest to the same kinds of visual and aural imagery that represents the forest itself. Here is an excellent example of the bardic quality of Crawford's poetics. The alliteration of the phrases shows how the device of repetition furthers the narrative, the "m"s and "l"s of that line

continue in the next: "And Max, the labourer and the lover . . . ". The solitary tree Max encounters here crashes in the same alliterative manner, with the busy "clatt'ring", "rattling" sounds climaxing in the ponderous line" . . . the first slainslow toppl'd to his fall".

The cohesiveness of the images in the poem also reflect the oral (and easily memorized) quality of the poem. The exterior landscape and Max's slaying of the tree are couched in the same images of thunder, the lion-throated roar, the sighs of the dove-dark images, later to be associated with Katie during her trials of doubt and fear. Max sees himself as a conqueror, the flaw in his vision of the new civilization. Max gains the "iron-welded arms", a hardness that makes him similar to Malcolm and Alfred, who are always surrounded by images of rocks and metals. His soul grows in greatness too, the greatness that will be "worked out" in Part VI as he risks himself to save Alfred from the mill-stream.

After clearing his land Max sets the fires to burn the brush, as his fellow-immigrant Malcolm had done before him, as the South Wind has reddened the forest. Crawford writes a magnificent passage describing the new cosmology Max has created in his "kingship" of this land he has cleared. The fires of his mountaineous brush piles meet in Heaven, "clasping flame with flame ". Max too has reached a point of stasis. The passage;

The thin winds swept a cosmos of red sparks  
 Across the bleak, midnight sky; and the sun  
 Walk'd pale behind the resinous black smoke.

is reminiscent of the journey of the Exodus. God's signs to humankind were clear there; Max, in his carry-over of negative Old World values of

conquest and kingship is weakening the light he has come to find. In his pride in his solitary strength, he obliterates it entirely.

For Love, once set within a lover's breast,  
 Has its own Sun-its own peculiar sky,  
 All one great daffodil - on which do lie  
 The sun, the moon, the stars - all at once,  
 And never setting; but all shining straight  
 Into the faces of the trinity,-  
 The one below'd, the lover, and sweet Love!

Curiously, that normally astute critic, James Reaney, has used this passage as a guide to Crawford's cosmology.<sup>26</sup> However, Crawford presents it within its narrative context as a specific example of a false cosmology. Max is setting up his own exclusive universe as Malcolm had; Max's slash fires, unlike the fires of autumn in the forest, obliterate the natural manifestations of God in the world, as well as the sight of Max's fellow workers with the axe, whom he has also failed to include in his universe. The never-setting sun, moon and stars are all contained within him in his false and undialectical parallel to the triune God. Although Reaney is correct that Crawford writes about a systematized vision, his error in attributing the daffodil to its centre points to a false interpretation of "Malcolm's Katie" and Crawford's other poetry. It further leads him to invent the "black daffodil" to explain "nothingness", a concept Crawford uses rarely, and defines more accurately herself in the image of "poppies" associated with Alfred. Because of Max's separation from the natural cosmos, the daffodil is already black, a dark backdrop for Max's static planets.

The real democracy Max should find himself a part of is described as soon as we see Max enraptured in his invented world. In the epic of



civilization to be created by thousands of Maxes and their correspondent Katies, Crawford shows the process of the arrival of all those who, like Max, see "sun-ey'd Plenty": the weavers, clerks and labourers who also now wield the axe. And as the "loom of Commerce" has entrapped them before, the "smooth-coated men" await to trap them anew. As space has been eclipsed to show Max's journey and time eclipsed to show seasonal change, time is eclipsed again to compress a horrific but realistic vision of the future when the engines and the smelters and the sawmills and the gristmills will rise. Again Crawford uses alliterative devices to include the cacophony of the talking entrepreneurs, the music of the "steel-tongued" axe and the "wail of falling forests", those final repeated "f" sounds almost an exhalation of the past. This human/epic level plays an important part in the early development of the context for Max and Katie's tasks. Although it fades in narrative importance in the latter parts of the poem as the focus is drawn to Max and Katie's trials, it is as substantive a backdrop to the action as the passages describing seasonal change. Crawford shows the growth of civilizations in the way it is likely to occur, in contrast to Max's early flawed vision, and Alfred's blind one.

Part II concludes with a love-song

And love builds on the rose-wing'd cloud,  
And sometimes Love builds on the land

that summarizes the ubiquity of love, Max and Katie's position in its process, and provides a transition to the scene of Katie's work of "loving".

Part III returns the setting to Malcolm's farmhouse, two winters and two springs after Max's departure. Malcolm's quietude and old age are

depicted in a particularly apt metaphor. As he looks out on his domain, which encircles and contracts him:

. . . . . his thoughts  
 Swung back and forth between the bleak, stern past,  
 And the near future, for his life had come  
 To that close balance, when a pendulum,  
 The memory swings between the "Then" and "Now";

The stillness of the pendulum is yet another Crawford device to eclipse time and show Malcolm's relation to it. His stillness fits well with the other images that define him: rock, greyness and iron. Katie, meanwhile, is her own "gay garden that foam'd about the [stone] walls". Like Max, she has her share of the old world values to outgrow before union with Max and the birth of a new civilization can take place. City training has taught her cultured ways; her link to the landscape is like her lawn, "velvet and sheer and di'monded with dew". And as Max sees himself as a king over the trees he felled, Katie has "her sceptre in her hand/and wield[s] it right queenly . . .", a gesture that becomes the old civilization rather than the new, democratic one to be created. These traits are grafts onto her essentially mannish country ways, for Malcolm has taught her all the duties of running an estate.

This passage introducing Alfred collects the imagery of the prophetic conversation in Part I. Katie is shown building Malcolm's love for her through her growing organisational competence; she attempts to open the stream of love in his heart of rock. Katie hopes that "some slight stroke/of circumstance might crumble down the stone". The line is an ironic foreshadowing of Alfred, the suitor that Max had prophesied in Part I as the breeze that might sway Katie's love. Again, ironically, it is Alfred

who provides the impetus in the dramatic action of the narrative that thrusts forward the union of Max and Katie.

In her first mention of Alfred, Crawford shows his power to dissemble: he can pretend to be either gentle, "a mere, pink, poetic nameless glow" or overbearing enough to "melt an adverse rock/marrow'd with iron", certainly an apt description of Malcolm. Both Malcolm and Alfred act as focuses on the human level that point the direction to the bond between Max and Katie, much as the Evening Star has pointed a direction at the end of Part I. The narrative switches attention from one to the other in the long beginning of Part III which sets the scene for the event of Katie's trial by water, one of the steps necessary to the maturation of her love.

Alfred, who can repress all feeling, is also mentally controlled through the limitations of his "wall'd mind". As Malcolm weighs Alfred's merits in his subjunctive way "I would there were a way to ring a lad . . .", Alfred explores his own motives similarly in the passage "O Kate, were I a lover . . .". Alfred is looking for the perfect ("One cares not to place against the wheel/ A diamond lacking flame . . ."), an image later used specifically to describe Katie's devotion to Max. He will not work toward perfection; he wants the consummate blossom, "all up-fill'd/ With love as with clear dew", an image, whether conscious or unconscious on Crawford's part, of a sexually aroused woman, one which echoes the earlier image of Katie as the perfect budding rose. Alfred's passions are dead, although it is suggested he once has been capable of love. Now he feels contempt for all but earthly, immediate wealth, and contempt for those "poor, blighted fools"

who on the level of the human/epic in the poem, believe that may find in the hereafter the comfort missing from daily life. Alfred's existential view of life sees oblivion as the pointless point of living. His perfectionism, cloaked in such words as "poisons", "haunter", "craving", "deep draughts of wild delights", "dregs" involve escape from knowledge and druggedness, something Crawford's vision was clearly opposed to, from the evidence of her temperance poetry, and the value she places on conscious knowing.

Much of the dramatic action of "Malcolm's Katie" involves Alfred, who bears some resemblance to Max. Many critics see him as a "supercilious, snobbish intellectual" like the boys from Colonel Strickland's school might have been.<sup>27</sup> This concept emphasizes only one part of Alfred's character and intimates that he is superfluous to the vision of the new Canada Crawford presents. Alfred has an important rôle in tempering Max and Katie's romantic illusions, as they have the role of restoring him to human feeling, and incorporating his better qualities into their vision. At times, Alfred and Max mirror each other, although there is an essential difference between them. Alfred's primary faults are doubts in the reality of love, shown in his soliloquy "Were I a lover . . ." and his doubt in the ongoing process of civilization, most vividly presented in his tirade to Max in the forest. His despairing view parallels that of Ion in "The Hunters Twain", and his rhetoric echoes that of Lucifer in Byron's "Cain".<sup>28</sup> This doubt makes Alfred unsuitable for Katie and for the ongoing growth of Canada. However, he will change, and his best qualities of Saxon attractiveness, and positive aspects of Old World cultivation, such as booklearning, are important ingredients for the new civilization.

The scene where Katie slips into the river shows the parallel attributes of Max and Alfred; they share the same mental and physical qualities. Katie falls while singing a "lily-song that Max had made / that spoke of lilies-always meaning Kate". Alfred saves her with his "iron arms" and cradles her against his "great chest". Neither character has a monopoly on physical or intellectual powers; each has both. While Alfred lacks feeling, the direst fault of any character in the poem, Max lacks clarity of vision. Only Katie has the sense of what civilization will mean, although she too suffers from romantic illusions that must be changed through physical and moral trial before she will be ready to play her part in the future.

It is in Part III of "Malcolm's Katie", where Katie undergoes her trial by water, that the interaction of Malcolm and Alfred culminates, and is confounded by the presence of Katie's dead mother. She speaks through the medium of Malcolm's dreams. It is unlikely that Crawford intended Malcolm's two prophetic dreams to represent voices from his personal unconscious, or manifestations of his senility. In Crawford's manuscripts there remain two accounts of extra-sensory manifestations in dreams. They both seem to be accounts told her by a Miss Rutherford, rather than stories she composed.<sup>29</sup> In "Malcolm's Katie", Katie's defence by her dead mother is ironic, for the woman speaks from the hereafter that Alfred claims does not exist. On both occasions, Katie's mother warns that Alfred is unsuitable. The first occurs while Malcolm tries to justify Alfred's courtship; the second, as Alfred saves Katie and his shout reaches the dozing Malcolm. She pushes him toward the definitive answer: "She shall not wed him - rest you, wife, in peace".

Katie's lily song echoes the images of the dew-filled blossom of Max's speech to her and Alfred's soliloquy on the perfect flower. The water-lily image suggests the same bush-garden centre as "The Waterlily" or Catharine Parr Traill's botanical description of the gold and white blossoms on the leaves that turn to red. The sexual imagery parallels that of Alfred's perfect dew-filled rose, but here the lily will be filled with the dew of love. This dew will arise not only from the lily itself but from the correspondence in nature, the high moon of summer, bearing the "chalice" of a sweet perfume. The love that will come to Katie when her transition from the old world is complete will be both sexual and sanctified.

"This is a day for lily-love", says Kate, as she steps onto the log that rises and falls, burying her in the water beneath it, almost a precise reenactment of the accident that befalls Max. Alfred's philosophical musing on his decision to save her reiterates his nihilism; as he fights the logs and water, his vision of both life and death is negative; death means return to the "black ocean" or to a rainbow that he doubts exists.

Katie's reaction to her rescue is one of gratitude - but steadfastness in her devotion to Max. Crawford uses the echoed image of the table diamond Alfred would find perfect by using it as an example of Katie's continued faith in Max: "its shield, so precious and so plain, / Was cut, thro' all its clear depths [with] Max's name.". The passage ends with Alfred's resolve to gain his end of marrying Katie by whatever means necessary, one of the high points of dramatic tension in the narrative.

Since the whole action is played out against the backdrop of the seasons, Crawford returns, in Part IV, to the change of winter upon the landscape, the final episode in the completion of the internal and external process of autumn and the landscape. "From his far wigwam sprang the North Wind . . ." shows the second wave of winter's action upon the forest after the temporary victory of the South Wind, that uniquely Canadian entente of the Sun with the "keen two-bladed Moon of Falling Leaves". The North Wind delivers the final blow, freezing the entire terrain. Despite the heavy-handedness of his "wrestling", "war-cries", "ice-clubs", "beating", he conquers the already weak, as he will be reconquered by the "breath of smallest flowers". The action of the North Wind prefigures Alfred's action in the sequence; he cuts down Max, who like the illusion of Indian Summer, bears the promise of spring and rebirth. The North Wind begs the woman to cover his misdeeds with a blanket of snow, a proper burial, and one that may delay the "Moon of Budding Leaves". Those small flowers which contain the life-force to undo the deeds of winter and snow might be the forget-me-nots, the aptly named flowers which bloom in gardens in early spring, and whose song Katie sings before the final unfolding of her trial by doubt.

Out in the forest, the stillness of winter is broken by Max's song as he chops down yet another tree. The song, "Bite deep and wide, O axe, the tree," brings in the bardic elements of prophecy, music and alliteration to the narrative. One can almost hear the crack of the blades in the wood and feel its withdrawal and the crack of the next stroke. But it is not his foe, the tree, of which Max asks questions, but his axe, the extension of himself. While Max's slaying of the tree repeats the epic convention of the slaying of the monster, Max's musing resembles

Alfred's self-questioning which results in the answers he wants to hear. The effulgent vision of the future is Max's illusion that nations are created by one individual and without adversity. The answer of the tree resounds Crawford's own optimistic vision of the future, like her idealised Toronto which "moves to meet the centuries. . . ". Max's pride in himself leads to his flawed vision of the future and opens him up to the onslaught of Alfred's illusion of finite civilizations, bounded by the doubts of his "wall'd mind".

Alfred sees the world in terms of decay. It is not ecological; it is not part of the same house (*οικος*) in which Max, Katie and the seasons operate. His concept of the mortality of civilization is one-dimensional and forms a vivid contrast to the sweep of stillness brought by the North Wind across the land. Alfred's images of deaths are inanimate, and portend no rebirth. They resound as part of the poetic devices in the narrative structure:

...The lean, lank lion peals  
His midnight thunders over the lone red plains,  
Long-ridg'd and created on their dusty waves,  
With fires red-hearted as the sun;

The sonorities of the "l"s in the first line provide an ominous undertone, in imitation of the hungry lion who stalks alone on a landscape frozen by another heraldic image, which invokes a memory of the reddened leaves of the autumn forest reflecting the sun in Part II. Alfred does not view the cycle of civilization as one of life, death and rebirth, but one of meaninglessness. The action of Max and the other immigrants moving westward is the action of fools. Time is the creator for him, in its dimension of direct and linear progression toward the absence of time. Time is not



modified or eclipsed by its interaction with space or by the quality of events. Time is monstrous, a huge bird with limbs, reminiscent of the Egyptian figure of Crawford's first published poem, "The Vesper Star". Time deludes human humanity by pretending each civilization is the first; the hope of growth is an illusion held by the ignorant.

Max, challenged, retorts with his own, yet incomplete, version of the world order. Love, alone, motivates the movement of civilizations. Alfred parallels a lie about his courtship of Katie to the story of Max's real courtship: he mentions the ring, and suggests that he and Katie too pledged their love in the light of the watch star, Venus. Alfred bases his concept of love, like his concept of civilizations, on finite Time. He denies that Katie's eyes, or faith, can be eternal.

The faltering of Max's faith in Katie causes the physical faltering of his blow against the tree but, most importantly interrupts and ends his monologue reinforcing his innocent, static vision of himself as conqueror of all the trees in the forest.

All the blue heav'n was dead in Max's eyes;  
Doubt-wounded lay Kate's image in his heart  
And could not rise to pluck the sharp spear out.

Like the ruthless spear of the North Wind, Alfred has slain Max's daffodil world, his false heaven. Max calls on Satan for guidance in his confusion. He cannot call on God because he has blotted out God from his cosmology. However, as ironic answer to the doubting Alfred, the sign does come from God, who is at once separate from but joined with Satan in directing the progression of the temporal world. The "All Worker, brooding o'er his

work" in the stillness of the winter woods lets the monster Max has tried to slay topple on him, and Alfred, in his purblindness, misinterprets the sign as one to Max rather than as a sign to them both. He colludes in what he believes to be Max's death by not attempting to rescue him. If "Malcolm's Katie" is read as a tightly woven narrative structure, the fact that Max still lives should come as little surprise. Max's scenes are linked to those of the elementals and the changes in the seasonal macrocosm parallel the actions in the microcosm. Max has been covered by the blanket of the "White Squaw", but he will survive his trial of near death to be reborn as the appropriate person to marry Katie and begin a new life in the west. Nor is Alfred the villain, if one examines the subtext. Like the North Wind, he is a necessary agent of life-producing change on the earth, one who acts as "an instrument clasp'd within the great creative hand".

Alfred's key decision is to tell Katie that Max is false, not dead. Katie would continue to be faithful to her lover and their mutual vision if he were dead. In her active "loving", death would not represent permanent loss. However, if Max were unfaithful, the entwined letters on the talismanic ring would crack, because Katie would have been dragged out of his heart screaming like the legendary mandrake root. Alfred has some qualms about his lack of action. The passage is melodramatic to the extreme, for Crawford uses Victorian rhetorical diction as Alfred, the cynic, grapples with the seeds of life that have begun to burgeon in his iron heart. Again, the dramatic tension is high. What remains for Crawford to develop on the narrative level is the story of Katie's trial of doubt, parallel to Max's.

The steadfastness of Max and Katie's love remains a constant

throughout the poem, as each lover acts upon the environment - Max, at the homestead and Katie, at home. There is never any real possibility that their bond will be broken, for Crawford makes their union of magic proportion. The original vow is alluded to at the moments of the utmost stress on its integrity. When Alfred lies about his attachment to Katie, Max says:

. . . . .You lie!  
 That is my Katie's face upon your breast,  
 But 'tis my Katie's love lies in my breast!

Part V chronicles Alfred's most desperate attempt to shake Katie's faith in Max. The setting reflects on a scenic plane the action on the human plane. Despite the beauty of the morning, frozen in a heraldic image

"Behold, sweet earth, sweet sister sky, behold  
 "The red flames on my peaks, and how my pines  
 "Are cressets of pure gold; my quarried scars  
 "Of black crevasse and shadow-fill'd canon, (sic)  
 "Are trac'd in silver mist.

the eagle awaits the dove, an ominous foreshadowing of Alfred's waiting "with iron talons" to try Katie.

Katie remains innocent of her peril. At Malcolm's request she sings the song of the forget-me-not, one of the spring flowers that has been hidden under the winter blanket of snow. Katie sings of the flower, "so rich with joy, so rich with pain", that is given at the time of the parting of lovers and that grows on the graves of the beloved. As Katie kisses Malcolm's "iron" hand, part of the wiles of her work of loving, he suddenly asks Alfred about Max. Through all of Alfred's lies of Max's falseness, Katie remains true. When Alfred suggests that Max is married to

an Indian woman, Katie replies:

"No, no", said Katie, simply and low-voiced  
 If he be traitor I must needs be false,  
 For long ago love melted our two hearts,  
 And time has moulded these two hearts in one,  
 And he is true since I am faithful still.

(pp. 227-228).

The external attributes of the characters represent their innermost essences. Katie's eyes become forget-me-nots, Alfred's heart becomes "a closer marble than before". But Max in Katie's vision at this moment is without external equivalent in imagery.

. . . . . Why, you have never told  
 "Us of the true soul that the true Max has;  
 "The Max we know has such a soul, I know."

Alfred, in his false impression that he understands the feelings of others, believes he has broken Katie's faith. He has as little understanding of psychology as he has of history. Again, in his uncommitted subjunctive diction, he muses, "Were there a god,/His only mocker, she, great nothingness! He cannot see Max as a pure soul, since he does not believe that souls exist.

In Part V, Crawford shows Katie's human growth, her readiness for the experience of union with Max. Through the narrative devices of repetition, alliteration and prophecy, Crawford shows a tightly constructed logical progression, that provides a cause-effect substructure of plot illustrating the validity of the actions of the characters on the human level. The transition to the epic meeting of Alfred, Max and Katie is effected through the narrative device of a brief song that focuses the change in the human sphere with the corresponding change in the landscape.

In "Malcolm's Katie", the reader or listener can always find the point of progression of the narrative by comparing one with the other, once the interlocking structure is understood.

The two-stanza song, beginning "Doth true Love lonely grow?" re-echoes the seasonal motif with the contrast of the still, perfect rose, Katie, and the kinetic spring tree. The second verse breaks the freeze: "But with Love's rose doth blow/ . . . truth with its leaves of snow". Katie has experienced pain - pain and pity. The wind Max prophesied has brought the rose through the winters of his absence. The song eclipses space and time to further illustrate the necessary pause of life-in-death, which carries promise of rebirth.

Part VI shows the birth of Alfred into feeling through his experience of pain.

"Who curseth Sorrow knows her not at all.  
Dark Matrix she, from which the human soul  
Has its last birth . . .

In its entirety, this passage provides a philosophical gloss upon the whole range of inter-related experiences Crawford has dramatized in earlier sections of the narrative. Sorrow, feeling, consciousness thrust toward progression and union; all are part of love. Reason, in "Malcolm's Katie" might be expressed as the consistent dialectic of creative vision and its antithesis; changing seasons which maintain the rhythmic impulse of world-order; the efforts of the settlers of the west to resist the traps of the "smooth-coat'd men"; the conscious efforts of lovers to seal a spoken vow with concrete actions toward its fruition. The dialectic of reason is always in motion, at times accelerated, at times, slowed down so that its

most intricate operations can be examined. It occurs on many spatial levels as well: in the human heart, in the aggregate hearts of many persons at once, in the change from season to season, and finally in the constant growth of the entire pulsating universe where "planet on planet pile".

Alfred, after another long musing on his growing awareness of untoward feelings arising in him (love for Katie and remorse for what he has done to Max), makes his final weak assault on Katie's stalwart trust in her absent lover. The scene takes place at night, by Malcolm's mills on the river which "roar'd and reel'd / in ivory arm'd conflict with itself". The river is equated to its native spirits, the naiads, a repetition of a motif from the fairy stories. The origins of these water-spirits is Greek rather than native Canadian, showing Crawford's eclectic use of materials from environment and culture. The effect is one of a lapse in a tightly ordered poetic construct, although the lapse is not too jarring if one recognises Crawford as an old and new world hybrid, and respects the poetic voice that arises from her total cultural heritage.

The section abounds in Greek mythological references, usually spoken by Alfred. His patron is Lethe, druggedness and dullness. If Katie could make him feel, and it is intimated that she could, she would be a "Nemesis with yellow hair/ To rend [his] breast". Ironically, he would then be worthy of her. It is his lack of the ability to feel that allows him to leave Max to die, rather than true villainy. If he were a true villain, evil through and through, it is likely that Crawford would have brought him to a sorry end, for, as the homilies for children show, she has little patience

with villains. But as another aspect of the kind of civilization wanted in the new world, Alfred can be incorporated into the structure.

Max's rescue of Alfred and Katie is the final step toward his maturation. His soul works out its greatness, as he saves Katie and then Alfred from the "pale, angry arms" of the naiads of the river. The gyre spins out its circle in the process of readying Max and Katie for their life together:

Where the coil'd waters straightened to a stream,  
 . . . . .  
 There lay the false fair devil, O my Kate!"  
 Who would have parted us, but could not, Kate!"  
 "But could not, Max", said Katie.

The brief Part VII brings together the threads of the narrative for a tableau of life on the cleared homestead. The season is undefined, although it seems to be early summer. The house is as Max pictured it when he spoke to the pioneer women of his Katie as he first began to clear the land. Malcolm dandles the child Alfred on his knee and speaks of his youth; he feels young again because he is living at the beginning of an era rather than at the end of one.

Crawford rarely writes of old people or children in her poetry. She seems mainly interested in the single young person, and the possibility of his or her actions to change the world. Although she often writes of parents and children, the characters of the parents do not achieve the complexity that the grown-up children do. One of the most extreme foreshadowings of this dependence on the parent upon the action of the child is in the story "Wava", where it is the shipwrecked child who enlists the aid of the fairies to return to her mother. In "Malcolm's Katie", Malcolm is

represented by images of rock. He cannot develop his earthly wealth any further; alone, he cannot begin again. He is to be acted upon rather than acting, until he achieves personal growth of accepting Max, and indeed, Katie, (for he had to be convinced of the correctness of her judgement). Only then can he move on to the new and participate actively in its growth. The presence of Malcolm in the new Eden is one of Crawford's surest indications that love in all its forms will prevail and all components of the universe must transform and be transformed for new civilisations and new seasons to be continued.

Examination of "Malcolm's Katie" in the light of narrative, Crawford's most comprehensive literary device, illuminates her imaginative and artistic skill. The basic sense of cosmic order which she developed at an early age appears here in its mature and most complex form, enriched by her sophisticated use of alliterative techniques. "Malcolm's Katie" shows Crawford's poetics and Canadian narrative poetry in its highest form.

iii



The third example of Crawford narrative returns to the short story form studied in Chapter I. In the story, "In the Breast of a Maple", narrative assumes an identity apart from plot; it is the substructure held within the actions of the characters and the movement of the landscape.

"In the Breast of a Maple" is one of few Crawford pieces with external evidence of the date of its composition. The manuscript, reproduced in Appendix E, bears the crossed-out title "A Bar of Sunset/ Written for



Pictorial". The letter from the editor of Pictorial Times, reproduced in Appendix D, regarding the story "From the Heart of a Maple" shows it was received in late 1886 or early 1887. Since Crawford died on February 12, 1887, the story represents the kind of literary and commercial concerns that occupied her before the abrupt end of her life. If the story was composed shortly before its submission to the periodical, the handwriting will be useful evidence toward the establishment of the chronology of Crawford's important poems and novels.

The story is set in Québec, probably for both literary and commercial reasons. Pictorial Times published in Montréal, and was directed towards the Anglophone. The choice of the Québécois characters and the locale on the banks of the St. Lawrence probably derived both from genuine interest in the varied locales of the Canadian scene and feeling for the regional concerns of her literary market. The characters are presented as Francophone, but they bear more resemblance to the French peasant than the habitant. Also adding local embellishment are references to the Indian people of Québec. Monsieur Dalmás is likened to "Master Rabbit" of the Algonquin story tellers and Marie de Meury, the Central character, upon hearing a voice behind her, thinks it is a "Mu-se-gisk", an "Indian Spirit of the Air". As well as filling out the details of her locale, the Indian references illustrate Crawford's fascination with the native mythology of the land, and probably give an indication of her reading of Schoolcraft, and/or direct contact with Indians.

A summary of the narrative of the story is very different from a summary of the plot. The narrative shows Marie de Meury chopping down a maple tree and fending off the marriage proposals of M. Dalmás. His son Jean

has been absent one year, although he is in love with Lucille, Marie's younger, frailer sister. At the time of his return, the tree falls, the lovers are reunited, and a wallet is found in the centre of the trunk of the maple which shows the three can begin a new life together without any fear of M. Dalmas and his wealth.

The entire plot is recorded in one hasty, unsuccessful paragraph at the end of the tale, as the wallet is found.

It was a receipt for ten thousand dollars the amount of a mortgage due on their place of de Meury and held by Monsieur Dalmas. Fifteen years before, an unexpected legacy had enabled Monsieur de Meury to lift this lien on his estate: he had paid the money to Monsieur Dalmas, and returning through the bush had dropped the book containing the latter's receipt in the snow. On his arrival at home, his death illness, a sharp inflammation attacked him, before he missed his pocketbook and the next day he lay dead. Monsieur Dalmas denied the lost receipt and took possession of de Meury, leaving the widow and her two orphan children to fight the wolf on their threshold. . . . Jean Dalmas had fallen in love, very naturally, with his neighbor, lovely Lucille, and after a stormy scene with his father, one year before, had rushed desperately away to make a home for the sweet young girl or perish in the attempt. . . .

Although Crawford presents years of events in a flashback, the characters in the story are not dependent upon the finding of the wallet containing the receipt for the payment of the mortgage for good to win out over the evil of M. Dalmas. Marie always spurns him, and confronts his insults toward his son and her sister. Those lovers, Lucille and Jean, will marry with or without Dalmas' blessing or wealth. Although Crawford hastily inserts a plot into the story toward the end, it does not change anything or

make the reader more aware of the essence of what is going on. Narrative for Crawford is very different from plot; again, as in her fairy stories and "mature" narrative poems, the information she puts across is carried in the images of the landscape and the physical and magical actions of the characters.

Crawford paints the heroine of the story, the Amazon-like Marie de Meury, in the broadest physical terms of any woman in the stories or the poems I have read. She is linked thematically to the maple tree; it is as strong as she; and it is Marie's strength of heart that allows her to find the wallet. Like Katie, she is a rose in a Canadian garden; unlike Katie, she acts upon the forest and upon her destiny, with physical labor. Indeed, in this story it is the woman who fells the tree and the man who chops it up, the lesser physical act associated with the finding of the wallet in the tree trunk, which establishes that Marie owns the de Meury estate and need not tolerate the advances of the dishonest landlord, M. Dalmás,

Marie de Meury is no fragile orphan, who would be at Dalmás' mercy were it not for this change of fortune.

Mademoiselle de Meury's fine jaw became steel,  
 her raven brows contracted, she fixed her moccasined  
 feet in the snow as a pine strikes its roots into the  
 earth: she threw out her arms in a noble curve, and again,  
 bright as a sharp young moon, her heavy axe head buried  
 itself in the trunk of the maple: Her broad bosom swelled  
 at the power of the stroke, a proud crimson dappled her  
 cheeks and then settled into the level, satin-red of a  
 rose - her large nostrils swelled and grew fixed as  
 marble, one snowy tooth longer than its fellows bit into  
 her full under lip - her steady black eyes looked  
 implacably at her sturdy foe, the maple. "One half hour  
 and I shall have my foot on its neck", she said aloud.

The portrait of Marie de Meury shows the woman of the axe, an androgynous combination of both Max and Katie of "Malcolm's Katie". It is her sister who is united with a lover; Marie will continue alone, with the pair, but complete in herself.

The villain, Monsieur Dalmás, is never really a threat. When he sees that the incriminating receipt has been found, he "vanished like a little yellow fog, the sweat running down his face and body in streams". It is noteworthy that the word "yellow" is again associated with a dark or threatening force, as with the shark in "Wava" or the bull-images of Malcolm's anger in "Malcolm's Katie".

Images of a moving landscape carry ahead the narrative, move the reader from the crisis of the action, the chopping down of the tree to the backdrop of the moment in civilization when the characters operate.

Her yoked red oxen patiently trampled the forest snow, and made sweet rude music clanking the great logging chain attached to them: the St. Lawrence flowed mightily below her, its ice banks groaning and thundering in the still, sharp air: the sky was like an inverted turquoise goblet which poured a golden wine over a silver world. Through the naked interlacements of the bush, a ruinous old stone house showed its melancholy grey walls to which clung the skeleton fingers of bare vines. On a bluff roll of land on the other hand, a fine modern mansion dominated the scene: the residence of Monsieur Dalmás.

In this Québec milieu, civilization has changed characteristics. The old house of stone held the honest people who paid their debts; the new house holds the thieving moneylender who preyed on the unsuspecting daughters of the de Meurys. However, his son Jean will have nothing to do with him,

and will marry the daughter of the honest man, thus completing the familiar Crawford formula of the establishment of a new civilization from the dregs of the old.

The story ends with the kind of image that freezes the action and leaves one last heraldic picture of the scene that recapitulates all its elements. A look at the last page of the manuscript shows that Crawford retained one more sentence in this draft and struck out another. Despite the poetic phrasing of the line ". . . while Jean guided the big-eyed oxen homeward through the exquisite and splendid shadows and lights", the image in the passage

The inexpressible glory of a Canadian winter sunset broke through the woods; the snow became fields of rose, the trees stood one-half ruby. the other, jet. The arch above was delicately green with a noble moon making a silver day in it.

better summarizes the friendship of the three who will begin a life of silver days together, combining the best of the old civilization and the new.

## CONCLUSION

The chief purpose of this study has been to show that a coherent imaginative vision can be found in Isabella Valancy Crawford's writing and that it is given expression in original narrative forms. The fairy stories that Crawford wrote in her youth show the forces already operating in her imagination which will grow in depth and scope in her later works. Moreover, the early stories provide examples of Crawford's development of narrative on different levels, and her ease in disregarding conventional deployments of temporal and spatial perspectives. Crawford's poetry, in both theme and imagery, has a visionary, forward-looking quality. An examination of her personal, social and cultural background explains something of her instinctive desire to envision a better world for the future. In her later works, Crawford presents her metaphysics in varied narrative forms. In "Gisli, the Chieftain", Crawford shows the functioning of the universe on the semi-divine and the divine levels, and explores the saga form. In "Malcolm's Katie" love and work unite to create a new civilisation; narrative operates on three important levels: seasonal, social and personal to create a poetic vision of epic dimensions. "In the Breast of a Maple" Crawford shows how narrative functions separately from plot. The story is important because it points out some of Crawford's philosophical concerns toward the end of her life, and its reproduction in this thesis adds another work to the slowly growing corpus of Crawford works available outside the manuscript collection.

Each section of this thesis points a direction toward further examination of Crawford's work and life. The first task is the edition of her

complete works. This will involve publication of all of the short stories and novels extant in the Lorne Pierce Collection, and a new search into the newspapers, magazines (and, I suspect, song books), in which Crawford might have published. A chronology of her creative output, as well as her publication, must be established. Knowledge of Crawford's work must be enriched with knowledge about her life. Some of her literary sources seem evident, but what of the details of life in her milieux of Peterborough and Toronto? Music in many forms underlays much of her work; did this come from frequent attendance at concerts or opera, or only from her homelife? Crawford often uses a masculine persona; was this a literary affectation or an honest expression of an androgynous person, who sometimes consciously identified with the deeds of both her male and female characters?

The study of Crawford's life and work is important not only because her writings are enjoyable, but also because she sheds light on the conditions of other women in her time. She belongs in the canon of feminist literature because the circumstances of her life as a writer who did not enjoy bourgeois privileges or position provides more information about the kinds of hardships and victories our foremothers knew. One of her common themes is the mother-daughter relationship. One wonders if Crawford did not gladly choose the option of companionship with her aging mother in order to escape the physical confinements of the marriage rôle, and how much economic circumstances shaped the life of a woman whose deep eroticism shows through so much of her work.

Much of Crawford's writing also belongs in the canon of working-class literature. Her social conscience, like her poetics, was coloured by


the society in which she lived. Her condemnation of the conditions of the life of the poor arose from her own economic circumstances and the general public investigations into the "sweating" system. Crawford acquired her nationalist sentiment both from her own sense of civilization evolving from civilization (like the flowers of her gardens perennially blooming, dying, yet producing seeds or roots for new life), and from the predominant political emphasis on the unity of Canada.

It is not unusual for a woman to be trapped within the confines of the official thought and taste of her times, particularly if her livelihood depends on her ability to cater to the tastes of the literate public. However, Crawford seemed to be interested in the most innovative approaches possible. She wrote poems in dialect, which seems to have been considered a breach of the Queen's English. She deviated from the orthodox Christian sentiments of her time with her personified landscapes which became so real as to be the embodiments of gods. Crawford lived at the farthest edge of the possible lifestyle and literary subjects for a "decent" woman of her day. Always, her work is full of optimism, the "love" that would carry her through, if "reason" might make her cynical.

Besides the publication of all her work, there are other ways in which Crawford's work can be made more familiar to Canadians than it is now. The word "cinematic" seems so apt to describe her imagery. "Malcolm's Katie" and "The Hunters Twain" provide dramatic scripts that would adapt very readily to the stage, film or dance. Much of Crawford's work would couple easily with visual illustration or musical setting.



I regard the reprint and criticism of the fairy tales the most important contribution of this thesis to the body of knowledge about Isabella Valancy Crawford. And, given that Crawford always tells a story, I have selected narrative as the most comprehensive guide to her poetics. The examination of two major poems and a "mature" short story in the light of the early works provides a glimpse of some possible directions research may take before the importance of Crawford's life and work can be critically assessed.



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<sup>22</sup> Crawford, "How Pussie Stole the Cream" (unpublished ms. loc.cit.).

<sup>23</sup> Crawford, "Dirty Jim" (unpublished ms. loc.cit.) p. 14-16.

<sup>24</sup> Crawford, "Tommy Mutton and the Bees" (unpublished ms. loc.cit.)  
p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> Crawford, "Idle Jane" (unpublished ms. loc.cit.) p. 22.

<sup>26</sup> Crawford, "The Bad Little Boy and the Frog". (unpublished ms. loc.cit.)  
p. 10-11.

#### Notes to Chapter II

<sup>1</sup> John W. Garvin, "Isabella Valancy Crawford" (Canadian Bookman, IX, May 1927), p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Livesay, op.cit.

<sup>3</sup> Crawford, "Huldah's Arrow" (unpublished ms., loc.cit.) p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Hale, op.cit., p. 114.

<sup>5</sup> Crawford, "Aunt Dorry's Potpourri" (unpublished ms., loc.cit.).

<sup>6</sup> Compare Martin, op.cit. and Garvin, Canadian Bookman, op.cit.

<sup>7</sup> Dorothy Livesay, "Tennyson's Daughter or Wilderness Child?: the Factual and Literary Background of Isabella Valancy Crawford" Journal of Canadian Fiction II, 3 (Summer 1973).

<sup>8</sup> Crawford, Collected Poems, p. 215.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> Wilson, op.cit., p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> John B. Ower, "Isabella Valancy Crawford: The Canoe" Canadian Literature 34 (Autumn 1967), pp. 55-56.

<sup>13</sup>Northrop Frye, "Fables of Identity", quoted in Yeoman, op.cit., p. 42.

<sup>14</sup>For these and other biographical data on Crawford the authoritative source is the Martin article cited above.

<sup>15</sup>Crawford, Collected Poems, p. 80.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Martin, op.cit. pp. 391-392. Martin gives exhaustive search of Irish medical records which do not show any record of Dr. Stephen Dennis Crawford. This suggests to me that he may have been a self-appointed doctor and may explain some of the townspeople's mistrust of his healing techniques.

<sup>18</sup>Andrea Lebowitz, Lecture, October 15, 1974.

<sup>19</sup>Hale, op.cit., p. 12.

<sup>20</sup>Government of Canada, Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital. Report and Evidence, Ottawa, 1889.

<sup>21</sup>Crawford, "memorandum book" (collection of items relating to Isabella Valancy Crawford, loc.cit.)

<sup>22</sup>City of Toronto Illustrated Business Directory for 1879-1880, (Toronto: Might and Taylor and Co.,) n.d.

<sup>23</sup>Wilson, op.cit., p. 3.

<sup>24</sup>Sister Patricia O'Brien, "Isabella Valancy Crawford" Peterborough, Land of Shining Waters, (Toronto: U. of Toronto Press, 1967) p. 380.

<sup>25</sup>E.J. Hathaway, "Isabella Valancy Crawford", Canadian Magazine (October, 1895) Quoted in Reaney, introduction to 1973 reprint, p. xvi.

<sup>26</sup>Joan T. Scott, "The Conditions of Female Labour in Ontario", Toronto University Studies in Political Science, #3, 1892, quoted in Greg Kealey, Working Class Toronto at the Turn of the Century (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1973), pp. 1-16.

<sup>27</sup>Ontario Board of Health, Annual Report, 1884, p. 98.

<sup>28</sup>Crawford, "Hunters Twain" (ms. in the Lorne Pierce Collection, loc.cit.) pp. 7-8.

- <sup>29</sup> John W. Garvin, Letter to Lorne Pierce, March 26, 1935, (the collected papers of John W. Garvin, Lorne Pierce Collection, loc.cit.).
- <sup>30</sup> Crawford, Collected Poems, p. 97.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid. p. 36.
- <sup>32</sup> Crawford, "The Hunters Twain", ms. p. 12.
- <sup>33</sup> Frank Bessai, "The Ambivalence of Love in the Poetry of Isabella Valancy Crawford", Queen's Quarterly 77 (Winter, 1970), p. 418.
- <sup>34</sup> Hale, p. 115.
- <sup>35</sup> Crawford, Collected Poems, p. 150.
- <sup>36</sup> Wilson, op.cit., p. 3.
- <sup>37</sup> Reaney, "Isabella Valancy Crawford", Our Living Tradition (2nd & 3rd Series, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 271.
- <sup>38</sup> Hale, op.cit., p. 2.
- <sup>39</sup> Crawford, "A Bar of Sunset" (unpublished short story ms. in the Isabella Valancy Crawford papers, loc.cit.).
- <sup>40</sup> Crawford, [Italy - Custom - Religious] (unpublished ms., loc.cit.).
- <sup>41</sup> Helen Hunt Jackson, Sonnets and Lyrics (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1873), p. 17.
- <sup>42</sup> Crawford, ibid, p. 252.
- <sup>43</sup> Jackson, p. 16.
- <sup>44</sup> Crawford, "The Wooing of Gheezis: An Indian Idyll", Old Spookses' Pass, Malcolm's Katie and Other Poems. (Toronto: Bain, 1884), pp. 106-107.
- <sup>45</sup> Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, The Song of Hiawatha, (Chicago, George M. Hill Co., 1898), p. 60.
- <sup>46</sup> Crawford, Collected Poems, p. 149.

<sup>8</sup> Gerard J. Brault, Early Blazon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology (New York: The Viking Press, 1963), p. 487. Translated from the Prose Edda of Snori Sturlason.

<sup>10</sup> Hamilton, p. 460.

<sup>11</sup> Hilda Roderick Ellis, The Road to Hel (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 66.

<sup>12</sup> James Reaney and Ann Yeoman both write about this aspect of Crawford's work.

<sup>13</sup> Herbert Spencer Robinson, The Encyclopedia of Myths and Legends of All Nations (London: Kaye and Ward, Ltd., 1962), p. 159.

<sup>14</sup> Lewis Spence, The Outlines of Mythology (New York: Fawcett World Library, 1961), p. 112.

<sup>15</sup> Campbell, p. 488.

<sup>16</sup> Wilson, op.cit., p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> Daniells, op.cit., p. 159.

<sup>18</sup> Reaney, Our Living Tradition, p. 271 and introduction to Collected Poems of Isabella Valancy Crawford, p. xxx.

<sup>19</sup> Dorothy Livesay, "The Documentary Poem: A Canadian Genre", Contexts of Canadian Criticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 274.

<sup>20</sup> Bessai, op. cit., p. 415.

<sup>21</sup> All quotations from "Malcolm's Katie" are from Crawford's 1884 edition, as reprinted in Edwards. Changes from that text in Garvin's 1905 edition are separately noted.

<sup>22</sup> Livesay, "Tennyson's Daughter . . .?", p. 164.

<sup>23</sup> Crawford, "The Halton Boys" (Isabella Valancy Crawford papers, loc.cit.).

<sup>24</sup> "Small rose face" becomes "little rose face" in Garvin.

<sup>47</sup>Sister Patricia (O'Brien), "Isabella Valancy Crawford", Peterborough: Land of Shining Waters (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. 372.

<sup>48</sup>Roy Daniells, "Isabella Valancy Crawford, Carman, and D.C. Scott", Literary History of Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. 158.

<sup>49</sup>Livesay, "Tennyson's Daughter...?", p. 164.

<sup>50</sup>Alice S. Rossi, "Feminist History in Perspective: Sociological Contributions to Biographic Analysis", A Sampler of Women's Studies (Ann Arbor: U. of Mich. Press, 1973) p. 98.

<sup>51</sup>Sydney Scott Crawford, "After a few weeks sojourn in that gayest of cities . . ." and "Some years after my aunt's marriage . . .", attributed to Isabella Valancy Crawford and catalogued with her papers, loc.cit.

<sup>52</sup>Daniells, p. 160.

<sup>53</sup>Reaney, Our Living Tradition, p. 278.

<sup>54</sup>[Lorne Pierce], handwritten notation filed with a group of Crawford's poems collected from Toronto newspapers by John W. Garvin, "Hathaway says . . . that Lord Tennyson, the poet laureate wrote, congratulating her on her work, making special mention of this piece 'Old Spookses Pass'".

### Notes to Chapter III

<sup>1</sup>Crawford, Collected Poems, pp. 90-91.

<sup>2</sup>John W. Garvin, Letter to Lorne Pierce, April 1, 1935, (John W. Garvin papers, loc.cit.).

<sup>3</sup>Theodore M. Andersson, The Icelandic Family Saga (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>5</sup>Gudbrand Vigfusson and F. York Powell, eds., Corpus Poeticum Boreale (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883 2 vols.) II, p. 283. X

<sup>6</sup>Andersson, p. 54.

<sup>7</sup>Edith Hamilton, Mythology (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1942), p. 459.



<sup>25</sup>The line reads "I did not know how choice a thing I am" in Crawford's 1884 edition and does not appear at all in the 1905 edition.

<sup>26</sup>Reaney, Our Living Tradition, pp. 275-287, and introduction to Collected Poems, pp. xxx-xxxii.

<sup>27</sup>Livesay, ibid., p. 164.

<sup>28</sup>I am grateful to Professor Sandra Djwa for pointing out the parallels between the debate of Max and Alfred and the philosophical arguments between Lucifer and Cain in Byron's "Cain".

<sup>29</sup>Crawford, "Dreams and Manifestations" (unpublished mss. in the Isabella Valancy Crawford papers, loc.cit.).

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\_\_\_\_\_. "Huldah's Arrow". Unpublished short story ms. Isabella Valancy Crawford Papers, Lorne Pierce Collection, Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario, May 13, 1873.

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## Appendix A.

"The Waterlily". Reproduction of a ms. by Isabella Valancy Crawford. Early short story. Original in the Isabella Valancy Crawford Papers, Lorne Pierce Collection, Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario.

# The Water Lily

## Chapter I.

Beneath the great old oak, where the Fairy Court usually held their revels, a profound silence reigned, and a general gloom seemed spread over the assembled fays. King, pearly tears trickled down the cheeks of several, and each one regarded his or her neighbor with looks of dismay.

Gradually a low murmur rose, and a fay who seemed to have just arrived (to judge from the droop of his wings) was surrounded by an excited crowd, who all questioned him at the same time. This breach of Court etiquette was owing to their majesties not having yet arrived — a fact which was testified to by two empty thrones of gold, which were set on a kind of dais.

[mounted]

formed of a white mushroom, covered with scarlet velvet richly embroidered with exceedingly minute pearls.

The tired fay answered the inquisitive multitude as well as he could, but seemed much relieved when the tinkling of bells announced the approach of the King and Queen. He hastened to place himself near the throne, while the glittering groups of jays spread themselves into a wide semicircle to receive the royal party, and again relapsed into a profound silence.

Presently, winding along a road which led between two daises, which flanked and leaned towards each other as if to embrace, appeared Oron and Sitanier, mounted on milk-white steeds, and attended by many jays of quality, also riding snowy halfpays, every hair of whose manes were adorned with myriads of silver bells. Their majesties were distinguished from their courtiers by their superior stature and the stateliness of their carriage; indeed so tall was the King that his plumed cap was nearly dashed from his head by the silvery petals of one of the daises, which, somewhat overladen with dew, drooped more over the path than its companion. Sitanier, more prudent, bowed her head as

They passed beneath it and thus  
 to the brain approached the oak Titania expressed her surprise  
 at the extreme quiet, and her astonishment was augmented when  
 she beheld the sorrowful countenance of her faithful subjects, who  
 were wont to greet her with music and joyous dances.

However, with their usual dignity, the royal pair ascended their  
 thrones before enquiring into the cause of so singular a reception.

Protivionary a jay — apparently of consequence from the diamond  
 vessel which he bore — to advance, they requested him to solve  
 the mystery of so unusual a state of affairs.

The jay informed their majesties that the Queens messenger  
 had returned to court with tidings of her favorite maid of  
 honor, who had been missed from the revels one night, and  
 was since supposed to have strayed away, or been stolen by  
 some malignant gnomes, of whom a hostile tribe dwelt in a  
 neighboring hill-side. The messenger jay had immediately been  
 dispatched to seek information concerning her, and had but  
 just returned from his weary quest.

Titania expressed much satisfaction on hearing this news, and

commanded the messenger to advance and announce the result of his travels.

The jay — who had found time to don a magnificent mantle formed of the petal of a Bush-rose — came forward in obedience to the mandate of his sovereign, and bowing low, related his adventures in search of the missing maid of honor, while their majesties and the court listened with breathless attention to the recital.

After leaving the boundaries of Fairyland, he commenced "I travelled in the direction of the hill-side haunted by our enemies, the gnomes, thinking that perhaps Juldora, the king of those magnificent people, was the robber who had carried off the jay, Roove — Bush. But on the second day of my travels I folded my wings for a brief space in the blossom of a honeysuckle, and for a short time enjoyed a refreshing slumber, which was soon disturbed by a scarlet humming-bird, who came to seek in the depths of the flower that sweet substance from which it derives its nectar. We entered into conversation, in the course of which I mentioned the object of my journeying. The humming-bird



looked extremely grave, and told me that he was revised that  
 "I had met him, as he knew somewhat of the Jay. <sup>or</sup> entreated  
 him to be more explicit, and he informed me that while  
 hovering over a purple iris on the banks of a distant stream  
 he had perceived a noble cockle-shell gliding over its waves.  
 drawn by sixteen water-spiders. In it were Prince Crystal-coat, the  
 eldest son of the King of the water-celtes, and the Jay, Proc-Blook,  
 who wept bitterly and entreated him to allow her to return to  
 Fairyland. This he refused to do, and at this stage the humming-  
 -bird lost sight of them. Thanking him for his information, I  
 immediately turned homeward, in order to lay these tidings of  
 Proc-Blook before my Royal Mistress."  
 Titania and Oberon were excessively indignant when they heard  
 of the conduct of Prince Crystal-coat, and were for taking some-  
 -mary vengeance on the whole race of the water-traitors. As they were  
 about to dispatch a messenger bearing a challenge to that  
 court, a Jay of noble presence advanced, and throwing himself  
 at their feet, begged to be heard.  
 The Queen smiled graciously, and Oberon gave him permis-

-sion to speak and make his desires known.

"I would be a great pity, most Pious Monarchs," said the Jay  
"to involve our people in strife with the Water-Beetle, when a sim-  
-ple arm is sufficient to rescue the lovely Rosebush; and if your  
Majesties will give me your permission, I will myself set forth  
"this hour on the business, and shortly conduct the Jay safely  
"to Fairyland."

A murmur of admiration ran round the courtly circle, and Silenus,  
smiling significantly at them replied.

"Yours shall the task be, good Goldenball. In your return you shall  
"claim whatsoever reward you will, be it from our treasury or  
"from the beauties of our court. You have our leave to depart.  
"valiant Jay!"

Goldenball kissed their Majesties' hands, and bowing to the  
ground, quickly disappeared, and immediately after the assembly  
broke up; none of the Jays feeling inclined for revelry while uncertain  
of the fate of their sister.

Many were the encomiums pronounced on the gallant conduct of  
Goldenball.

## Chapter 2.

Near the banks of a pretty stream stood a small white cottage, shaded by a large and stately elm tree, beneath which sported a snowy goat with a long and venerable beard. The walls, and even the chimneys of the little dwelling were nearly covered with festoons of dark, glossy ivy, in which multitudes of singing-birds annually built their nests, and repaid the good woman of the house for allowing them to do so, by frequent concerts amongst themselves, to which their landlady was always very willing to listen.

The plot of garden in front of the cottage was always aglow with flowers, from the stately stock down to the lovely herb-cress with its large purple petals, and in a shady corner a faint and delightful perfume betrayed the presence of a bed of lilies of the valley. Their white bells trembling in every passing breeze, and nearly

hidden in the folds of their large green mantles. This garden was quite remarkable for the number of butterflies and humming-birds which resorted to it, and neighbor Jimmie Steady-brown-coated bees seldom found it necessary to go further in their daily honey-seeking expeditions.

Dave Sely, the owner of this pleasant spot, was a widow, and had one child, a little girl named Margaret, a pretty creature, like the flowers in the garden for beauty and sweetness, and with a voice like the birds who sang amongst the ivy, for melody. She had many pets amongst the inhabitants of the garden, but better than any of them, and next to her mother, did she love the miller's son, who was two years older than herself, and who took her to sail on the river so often.

So one sunny afternoon, when she saw him coming up to the gate with a fishing-rod over his shoulder, she ran and asked her mother if she might go fishing with Tommy Bolt. Dave Sely told her she might, but desired her to return early, and not to fall into the river, and - promising obedience, Maggie trotted off

beside Tommy Bolt, carrying the tin can in which were the bait intended for the silvery-backed trout, which resided in a shady nook a good distance up the stream, and with which some whel Meggie and I well acquainted.

But that evening the trout were uncommonly shy, and abruptly seemed to laugh at the flies which Tommy played temptingly over their cunning heads. So the children sauntered up the stream, and soon found themselves on the shores of a lake which they had never seen before.

They stopped and uttered cries of delight, for they had never beheld anything so lovely as the beautiful solitude of thisylvan spot, of which they might have seen the discoverers, so lone and peaceful did it look in the rays of the setting sun.

I saw where the little stream which had guided them to it stole murmuringly away, the lake which was nearly circular in form, presented Embroken banks of a delicate green to the gaze, and from their overhanging heights graceful willows bent over the clear water, their long leaves floating on its liquid and unruffled surface, and forming a deep margin

of shade round the basin. Outside this dark circle, like a ruby in a sapphire, shone setting, the lake glowed with a vivid rose tint, deepened in spots into a <sup>brilliant</sup> crimson, the reflection from the western sky, bright with the rays of the setting sun, which however became paler every moment. A large and magnificent star suddenly appeared, flaring as it were on the boom of the lake, and the rose tint melted into a silvery and tender radiance, illuminating the scene with a strangely beautiful effect.

Stand-on heard the children stand, enjoying in profound silence the picture before them, hardly venturing to breathe lest they should break the spell and cause it to vanish from their gaze.

As the mild moonlight replaced the dazzling glow of sunset, Margaret pointed out to her companion a large white waterlily which had before escaped their dazzled sight. It lay too far out in the lake to be seized by the child's eager hand, and she regarded it with a sigh of admiration and disappointment. It was as white as the driven snow, and a pure light seemed to emanate from its petals, which were half closed, and emitted

an aromatic though faint fragrance.

As they stood regarding the weird beauty of the flower, a strain of melody, sweeter than mortal music, appeared to rise from its very heart, while its leaves quivered and shone more brightly than before.

Maggie trembled, and clung closer to Tommy, who opened his eyes very wide indeed. They did not dare to stir as long as these sounds lasted, but when all became silent they hastened home, pressing very close to each other as they ran, and did not stop until they found themselves in Dame Fido's cottage.

So far they related their adventure, and Margerit said she was sure it was fairy music, at which the Dame laughed, and said it was the song of a nightingale in a neighboring dell.

Tommy and Maggie looked at each other and were silent, for they knew that it was not the voice of a nightingale which they had heard.

But we must leave them for a short time, and return to the gallant Jay, Goldenball.

## Chapter 3.

After leaving the presence of Titania and Oberon, Goldenball stopped for a moment to consider as to the route he should take, and after brief meditation rose into the air, and turned south, in the direction of a large stream which lay in a pleasant valley some miles distant, and where he knew a large colony of water-bettles had lately taken up their residence. He did not hope to find the fair, Rosebush, there, but he hoped to obtain some ink-bag or her prison from quietly listening to the court little-tattle, the water-bettles being renowned for their gossiping propensities.

As the east glowered with the coming dawn, Goldenball arrived, somewhat weary, at the riverside, and as the beetles were not yet up, he curled himself in an empty nutshell, and enjoyed a comfortable nap.



not visible in the daylight, he wandered unperceived into the palace of the King of the Waterbeetles. Yet listen as he would, Proubushko's name was never mentioned amongst the groups of courtiers who crowded the spacious apartments, though on Prince Gya-calvato's absence being remarked on by a group of young sprigs in glistening green liveries, a stout, elderly beetle in other black habiliments, shook his head as he observed in a low tone

"His Highness is after no good, I warrant; I can tell you the King is in a rare passion about him": and then walked off looking very important, while the beaux exchanged significant nods, and strutted away in different directions.

Goldenball felt very sad as he wandered invisibly through the palace, and in the cool of the evening started again on his journey without having obtained any information to guide him on his way.

When the moon rose in the sky, and sailed through it like a silver ship on the dark blue waters of the ocean, Goldenball came to a pretty stream, where a haired sat beneath a willow and sang a sweet and mournful strain while she played upon a golden

[The name of her was he now much respected and  
 13

harp with silver strings.

Goldenball listened enraptured, and when she had made an end of her song, he ~~fast~~ fluttered to her side, and telling his story, entreated the wizard to tell him if she had heard any tidings of the lost Fey, Roseblish.

The wizard listened attentively, and then told him that Prince Crystal-coat held the Fey prisoner in his palace on the very lake from which her subject stream took its rise.

"But," continued the wizard, "he has bribed a powerful magician to lay a potent spell upon it, which cannot be broken by any effort of a Fey, and though I can guide you to its walls, I cannot assist you, having no spells as strong as those of the wizard."

Goldenball thanked the kind spirit for these tidings, and was about to set forth towards the lake, when she said that she would ask the voices of the stream if they knew aught of the Fey, and seizing her golden harp she sang

"Voices! Murmur 'ring voices rise

"From the voices, and say

"If aught ye know of Crystal-coat,  
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coming from every ripple - silver-crested with the moonbeams  
 - arose tiny, cloudy forms, shades which mingled and floated  
 through each other, and to which the moonlight lent a strange  
 radiance. While Goldenball watched these graceful shapes  
 the placid murmur of the stream assumed voice, and the  
 myriad spirits sang in chorus

"On the lake the lily lies

'Glimmering in the silver ray,

"In its bosom pearly-white

'Sad and tearful dwells the Jay!

"Aprite, nor Jay, nor elfin band

"E'er see break the potent spell

'Get an earth-born child has power.

'This is all that we may tell."

Having given utterance to this strain, the shadowy forms  
 gradually melted away, each one slowly sinking into its own  
 ripple, and naught was heard save the murmur of the stream.  
 Goldenball thanked the kind reiver, and continued his

way towards the lake where the river voices told him he would find the prison of the Jay, Rose-bush, for he determined to hover round the dwelling of his beloved, in the hope of eventually effecting her release.

Without any adventure he arrived at the lake, and winged his way to the spot where the waterlily lay: shining like a very great pearl. As he fluttered round it he heard a voice singing inside, and knew it to be the Jay, Rose-bush, lamenting her absence from her beautiful Fairyland.

Knowing from her thus singing that she must be alone, Golden-ball ventured to make himself known, and the Jay's heart palpitated with joy when she became aware that a friend was so near.

Though they could not see each other they conversed until morning, and Rose-bush informed Goldenball of the various incidents which had attended her capture and detention by Prince Crystal-coat. Together they endeavoured to form some plan for the Jay's release from her snowy prison, and it was only when the lake became like molten gold in the rays of the rising

man was weeded when ~~swimming~~ the water, where he  
rested for some time.

Towards evening, human voices talking close to his hiding place  
aroke him, and peeping over the edge of his crimson couch,  
he beheld a little girl with blue eyes and long brown curls, talking  
to a boy of about her own age. They were looking at the  
waterfall, and Goldenball heard the child say to her companion

"Oh! Tommy, how I wish I had that lily to take home with me."

"If I had a boat I could get it for you, Maggie," said the boy.  
"Tomorrow I will try to borrow one, and we will sail out and  
"get it for you."

"Oh! how nice!" said Maggie, clapping her small, rosy hands "Tomorrow,  
you lovely flower, you will be mine!"

"Don't be too sure," said Tommy for perhaps no one will lend me a boat; however, we'll  
try." and hand in hand the children departed towards their home.

Goldenball had listened attentively to this conversation, and remembering that the river

voices had told him that a human child alone had power to break the spell which the

Magician had laid on the lily, he immediately formed a plan for the release of Pevereluck.

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Learn that Goldenball flew away + hid himself in a  
glame-colored kobler which was hanging

## Chapter 4.

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Maggie and Tommy on the following evening wadeded sadly towards the lake. Every one had refused to lend them a boat, and Maggie could not help weeping as she said 'Then I shall never have the lily!'

"And why not, my pretty child?" said a voice beside her. Startled, she looked round, and beheld a very grand gentleman indeed, who regarded her with a pleasant smile. Now, Maggie had never before seen so fine a person, and she shyly put her hand into Tommy's, who with open mouth and rounded black eyes, stared at the stranger's dress, which was of blue velvet almost covered with gold and diamonds.

"And why cannot you have the lily, Maggie?" again enquired the gentleman.

"That is all right. When we change you shall come on mine. See, there it is."

The children looked towards the spot he indicated, and beheld in the light of the rising moon, a boat which shone like silver lying close to the shore. Maggie trembled with delight, and she and Tommy followed their new friend, who lifted them into the skiff, and rowed away towards the city.

In a few minutes they were beside it, and Maggie could almost touch it by leaning over the side of the boat. Tommy stretched out his hand to grasp it, but the stranger said

"No. It is Maggie's. She alone must touch it."

He then sang, in a very sweet voice, some words which the children could not understand, and pulled the boat up quite close to the flower.

"Now," he said gently, "now take your beautiful Lily!"

In an ecstasy of joy, Maggie grasped the flower, and with some exertion of strength detached it from the stem and pulled

"Because we have no boat, we pulled Tommy's skiff," said  
 "I do not see how we could have done it without."

it into the boat, which immediately shot like an arrow towards the shore, leaving a long, shining track on the calm waters of the lake.

Suddenly Maggie uttered a little scream, as an ugly black beetle ran out of the heart of the flower, and gave her chubby wrist a vicious nip. Tommy immediately seized the creature, and plunging it to the bottom of the boat, crushed it to pieces under his foot, at which the stranger laughed and seemed pleased.

As the boat touched the shore Maggie and Tommy jumped out, and Maggie gently kissed the white petals of the lily.

In a second a great and wonderful light shone round them, and a burst of harmony made the very air tremble. The petals of the lily slowly opened, and a creature no larger than a moth, but of the most exquisite beauty, unfolded her large, rose-colored wings, and rose from a golden couch in the centre of the flower.

'Little girl,' she said in a voice of extreme melody 'as you have been the cause of my release, I shall show you what the gratitude of a fay can do.'

As she spoke, she waved her hand over the lily which Maggie still



held, and instantly it changed into a flour of pure gold, and each clew-drop quivering on it became a diamond of great size and lustre.

"And I said the strange gentleman 'will also reward Tommy for valiantly killing our enemy, Prince Crystalcoat, the waterbelle. From this time, every fish which he catches in the waters of this lake, shall have eyes of pearl and scales of gold, and he shall grow up to be the richest and best man in the country!'

As he spoke the good gentleman disappeared, and in his place stood Goldenball, who immediately taking the bag, Knobblek, by her tiny hand, flew away towards Fairyland, leaving Tommy and Maggie standing so though in a dream. The boat had vanished, and when the children went to look for it they only found an empty walnut-shell floating out into the lake.

Goldenball's words came quite true, and Tommy did become a very rich and good man, and in process of time he married Maggie, and they and Dame Sidy, Maggie's mother, lived together very happily for a great number of years, respected and beloved by rich and poor.

## Appendix B.

"Wava, the Fairy of the Shell". Reproduction of a ms. by Isabella Valancy Crawford. Early short story. Original in the Isabella Valancy Crawford Papers, Lorne Pierce Collection, Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario.



## Wawa. The Fairy of the Shell.

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There was once a fairy named Ewaver, who reigned over a tiny islet which rose like a mound of green moss from the lucid waters of the ocean. It was crowned with a group of tall palm trees, which nodded their plumed heads in the soft breezes stealing to them over the sea, and gorgeous blossoms — tangled in wild and rich confusion — flung up their brilliant cups to the sun, as though to catch the golden, liquid beams in their painted chalice. A cascade of sparkling water flung itself in a glittering arch over a miniature precipice, and the thickets of flowering shrubs were constantly alive, in the daytime, with glaucous wings, and at night with the soft,

precious sparkle of myrical fireflies.  
 This islet was a favorite resort of birds on their journeys to distant shores, for on it they found abundance of juicy berries and grateful shades under which to rest their weary wings.

These wanderers were invariably made right welcome by the fairy, Seava, who liked to hear from their tidings of those far-away lands which she had never seen, for though she had existed for many years, her curiosity had never tempted her to leave her own sunny isle to explore unknown countries; indeed she had so many affairs of importance to attend to, in and about her little kingdom, that she found small leisure for flitting from place to place.

She spent much time in superintending the labors of some industrious coral-insects, who were employed in building a fine pink coral reef, which was intended to serve as the foundation of an islet similar to her own, and when not thus engaged she would seat herself in a nautilus-shell, and float out on the sea to observe what her fierce enemy, the shark, was doing, and he, when he saw her coming, would open his huge jaws for rage, and

As she was a very powerful fairy, he never dared to try and do her any mischief. But the mede sad hāve amongst the tiny fish which were under her protection, and when she smiled by him he would lask the calu sea into mountains of white foam, so that her nautilis boat would dance up and down on the seething waves, to her great annoyance, for the spray thus raised drenched her rosy wings and long, bright hair. When this happened he would rock with delight, at which sound all the little fish in the sea would start to the bottom, and hid themselves under the stones and weeds down there until the hideous monster had departed to his lair in a great cavern under the islet, when they would come timidly once more to the surface, to assure themselves that no harm had befallen their dear fairy, Iwawa. To you see that Iwawa had her troubles, and duties, and pleasures, just like mortals.

The shores of the islet were covered with every variety of beautiful shells, from those not so large as a small rosebud to great,

scarlet-lipped ones with high, peaked tops as white as snow, and twisted into queer, fantastic shapes, and it was in one of these latter that Iwawa resided, attended by some fairies of her own tribe.

This shall have been drawn back from the reach of the Gate, close under the shade of a jessamine, whose flowers hung over and around it like clusters of white stars, and it was the special duty of Iwawa's attendant Jays to see that nothing hurtful came near these sheltering blossoms, and every evening after the sun went down, crowds of them might be seen carrying acorns filled with dew, with which to refresh their charges after the heat of the day, with such care it was no wonder that the jessamine flourished, and her blossoms every year became larger and finer, and her perfume more delightful.

It was a favorite amusement of these jays to mount on the brown velvet backs of the bees who came seeking honey from the jessamine, and thus in turn to visit every flower on the islet, and sometimes the jays would make the bees bear them quite to the top of the largest palm tree, from which they could see for many miles over

... and when the merman's booming on the calm water,  
 While they combed their long locks with their white fingers, and  
 sang sweet, wild songs to each other.

Now the jays and the mermaids were very excellent friends, for  
 the former would carry to them blushing roses and other fragrant  
 flowers to deck their ringlets with, and in return the mermaids  
 would bring them pearls from the deep places of the sea, with  
 which Luvva and her jays loved to ornament their mantles: When  
 a storm was coming the mermaids would chant wild songs to  
 warn the jays of its approach, so that they might take refuge  
 from its fury, for which kindness they felt very grateful indeed,  
 as the roaring of the great white billows, and the fiery lightning  
 used to frighten the jays exceedingly. After such storms the  
 jays used to be very busily engaged in shaking the heavy raindrops  
 from the flowers, and carefully lifting up such as had been bent to  
 the ground by the wind, as well as helping the gaudy butterflies  
 to repaint their wings, tarnished by the excessive cloudf, and  
 assisting the spiders to repair their cobwebs, torn by the wind.

The shark was very fond of coming as near the shore as  
 he dared, and opening his mouth, in order to frighten the jays

[The mean, and wicked mermaid  
 laughing in the corners  
 of her eyes]

from their tasks by displaying to them his formidable teeth. But they only laughed at him, for they knew he could not and dare not harm them for his very life, and some adventurous ones would play him rare tricks. They would make arrows from the polished thorns of the roses, and hovering in the air above him, they would discharge clouds of these into his wicked eyes, and down his cruel red throat, causing him to wink and cough and dash about the water in a truly ludicrous manner, at which the jays would laugh until they cried.

Then a jay would charge himself into a five feet fish, and swim about quite close to his nose until the shark, feeling hungry, would make a dash at him, when lo! the fish would disappear from his very teeth, and a merry shout from the jays would announce the success of the trick played upon him. Then he would flounder away looking very savage indeed, and leaving a huge white track behind him as he flourished his tail to and fro, followed by the shouts and laughter of his tiny foes.

The mermaids hated him also, and indeed he was detested on account of his vicious disposition by every inhabitant of the ocean.



who all joined in teasing and abusing him, except the helpless little fish which could only swim away and try to escape by hiding themselves, when he approached with his jaws wide open to devour them.

He was always very active when the great black clouds, marching in the sky, proclaimed a coming storm, and as Iwawa and her Jays could not then venture abroad on the sea, he made great havoc at such times amongst the fish, who called in vain for Iwawa to protect them from him.

The afternoon it was very sultry, and Iwawa was swinging idly on the slender stalk of a Jessamine flower, in company with many of her Jays, and longing for the shadows and cool breezes of evening, when a group of mermaids came close to the shore and commenced singing their song of warning, at the same time pointing to the sky, over the blue surface of which heavy clouds were beginning to roll, some like great, ragged heaps of snowy wool, and others in the shapes of black lions, terrific griffins, and soaring eagles. The sea was ruffling into little spiral columns of foam, through which the white storm-birds

started, chasing each other hither and thither, and at some distance the yellow-white sides of master shark might be seen cleaving the waters as he darted through it on the watch for prey.

Uruva and her jays listened sadly while the mermaids sang as follows, tossing their long white arms up to the sky—

"Haste, haste away, each airy jay  
To rest in shell or flower,

For in the skies the sunbeam dies,

And sombre shadows lower.

"Quick, quick, begone! The wild winds moan,

The angry billows chiding.

"Oh each wave's breast and snowy crest,  
"The storm is onward riding."

As the mermaids finished singing they floated away, still tossing their gleaming arms, as they slowly faded out of sight.

Uruva immediately commanded every jay to retire, and the bravest jay flew to the top of a palm tree, and blew a blast on a trumpet flower, to summon any home who had strayed abroad

either on pleasure or business, and soon from every quarter they came flocking in, just in time to escape the first burst of the storm.

For nearly the whole night Lucrece sat listening in her shell palace to the roaring of the tempest, and trembling for the lives of her friends the flowers, and listening to the shrill wind as it whistled through her beloved jessamine. There came to her also the distant singing of the mermaids, who always loved to be abroad when the storm was wildest, and the shrieking of the storm-birds, as they floated over the foaming sea.

Some of the jays endeavored to amuse their mistress by playing on their lutes, but she bade them be silent, and a great quiet fell on them all.

Towards the middle of the night they heard the voices of the mermaids approaching the shore, and as they came closer and closer, they could distinguish the words of their song.

'Come hither, hither, gentle jays,

'Come tripping o'er the sands,

"Come hither, hither, gentle jays,

"Go to your loving hands

"A golden headed child we bear,

"A waif from distant lands."

Wave and her companions regarded each other in great astonishment, and as the song was repeated with great earnestness, she rose, and looking round on them said

"Who with me will respond to the call of the mermaids, for we may plainly perceive that they require our aid in some pressing need."

At first no one answered, and then the trumpet jays who was known by the name of Trumpet Flower, advanced to her side, and the remainder, not to be outdone, followed, wave and Trumpet Flower as they issued from the shell, and courageously took their way to the shore.

The waves were thundering in, and the jays crouched together and trembled as the spray dashed over them, but they steadily moved forward, and just as they reached the beach, the moon struggled for an instant through the dense clouds, and on the crest of an advancing wave the jays beheld, come swiftly

towards them, a group of mermaids, who held in their arms a child whose eyes were closed, and whose long hair streamed out like threads of gleaming gold on the dark and troubled waters.

As the huge wave reached them, the mermaids laid the child at Luvai's feet, and as they were borne swiftly back by the receding monster, they sang loud above the noise of the tempest —

"Take the wail and love her well,  
Breathe her round with fairy spell,

"For thy rosy bowers.

"'Tis a gift we matched for thee

"From the all-deavouring sea,

"Strew her path with flowers.

"See her mem'ry goes not back

"So the dull and mortal track

"The so far hath brook;

"Till she join thy elfin band,

"Dancing with thee hand in hand  
On the dewy sod."

Luava and all her jays crowded round the child, who lay as still and white as snow on the clump sand, and as they had never before seen a mortal, they fluttered about her, quite in a glow of curiosity, some lifting up her long, wet curls, while others peeped under her half-closed eyelids, and breathed the spray from her thick eyelashes.

The moon was now fairly to be seen, riding in a long rift in the clouds, and as the storm lulled more and more, Trumpet Flower and some other strong jays went to procure certain berries that were much esteemed by their tribe for their exhilarating properties. The juice of these, squeezed between the child's pale lips, restored her quickly to life, and in a moment she sat up, and her dark blue eyes fell upon Luava, with a look of astonishment, for never before had she beheld so tiny a creature.

"What place is this? and how did I come here?" she enquired, glancing round on the jays, who all shouted in chorus "The mermaids brought thee to us, little mortal!" and Luava, advancing, said with a sweet smile "Know, golden-haired

"one, that this islet belongs to me, and that everything in it is subject to my control. The mermaids saved thee from the devouring sea, and bore thee hither in their arms, but how thou camest to be in such peril of thy life I know not."

"Oh!" said the child "I remember that my dear mother put me in a <sup>great</sup> good ship to go to a distant country, and after I embarked her many times I sailed away, until a dreadful storm came and broke our ship to pieces, and everyone in it was thrown into the sea, and then I remember no more. Oh! good fairy, take me to my dear mother." and the child clasped her hands and wept, and the fays felt very unhappy at seeing her tears.

They did their best to console her, but in vain, and it was a long time ere ~~they~~ <sup>she</sup> would suffer them to lead her to the shade of the jasmine, for though but a little child, she was far too large to enter Uva's shell palace.

After a time Uva soothed her to sleep, and whispered such pleasant dreams into her ear that she smiled joyously as she slumbered peacefully on a couch, hastily formed for her by the fays, of fresh roseleaves.

Merry days passed by, and Uawa and the Jays fruitlessly endeavored to make the child, whom they called Goldie, forget her distant home and her beloved mother. They taught her their fairy lore, and, borne in their arms, she floated through the soft air in chase of the playful butterfly, and to her the flowers of the islet yielded their sweetest honey and most delightful perfumes, and at night she joined in their sportive dances on the glittering sands or on the dewy turf, and listened to the wild melodies of the mermaids.

Yet, beautiful as was the islet, and loving as were Uawa and her companions to the little way, the word "mother" quivered always on her lips, and her blue eyes glanced day and night over the ocean towards where her home lay. Far beyond the reach even of fairy vision.

Uawa and the Jays were exceedingly grieved at little Goldie's unhappiness, and one day Uawa said to her.

"Little Goldie, soon a tribe of white birds will pause here on their way across the sea to another land, and by their king!

"Who ~~was~~ named Fleetering, we will send a token to the

"mourning mother that her child still lives, and then perhaps



"She will leave her home to seek the child."

Little Goldie clasped her hands and thanked the good dove while she shed tears of joy at the idea of again beholding her dear mother. From that time she no longer chased the butterfly or joined in the sports of the jays, but sat under the jasmine, watching, always watching for the arrival of Fleeting and his subjects.

Every open master she would sail close to the shore, and regard her with a hungry eye, thinking what a tender morsel she would make, but he could not reach her, and the jays were careful that she should not venture near him, so that he always departed as hungry as he came, until one day he came when the jays were dispersed through the islet, repairing the injuries caused by a storm, and found little Goldie sitting alone under the jasmine, still watching for Fleeting.

"Ho! ho!" he thought "I shall certainly have her for my dinner to-day" and so in a very mild voice he said "Good morning, little Goldie, what a lovely day this is" and she smiled until he showed every tooth in his head.

"Oh dear!" thought little Goldie "how ugly he looks!" but she answered politely "Yes indeed, Master shark, and I hope you are quite well!"

"Only for one thing, Goldie," said the shark, shaking his head and sighing "but the truth is I have such bad news to tell you, that it has made me feel quite unwell!" and he sighed more deeply than before.

"Oh! what is it?" cried Goldie in great dismay, and the shark continued "your dear mamma is very ill indeed, and hearing that you were saved from the wreck and living on this islet, she begged me to come and carry you to her on my back in order that she might embrace you before she dies!"

"On hearing this Goldie began to cry, and forgetting fear and fasting she said "I will go with you, dear master shark, but how am I to get out there to you?"

"No thing easier," said the shark, his eyes gleaming and his mouth watering as he thought of how nice and plump she looked "wade as far into the sea as you are able, when I can catch you in my

"mouth and toss you up on my back, quite easily. Be quick, or we shall be too late!"

Goldie felt very much alarmed at the idea of venturing so near the shark, but she thought of her mother, and boldly put one rosy little foot into the sea and then the other, while the cunning monster eyed her approach with great satisfaction.

Just as she neared him, he opened his wide jaws, when a white arm rose from the sea beside him, and a stout branch of coral was introduced between them, in such a manner as to hold his great mouth open to its widest extent, while peals of laughter rang out like bells, as a group of mermaids rose to the surface and began mocking him as he tumbled and twisted in his efforts to get rid of the coral branch.

Little Goldie watched this scene in great surprise, while the mermaids sang, clapping their hands and clashing up the water -

"Swim away, swim away, nifty old shark!  
"Down to your cavern so deep and so dark.

"Dear little Goldie is safe on the shore.  
"Wicked old monster, come hither no more!"

with this the shark swam away, and as he never could get rid of the coral branch of course he never could eat anything, and some time afterwards he was found dead in his cavern from sheer starvation, and no one felt in the least sorry for him.

Goldie thought it very cruel of the mermaids to treat the shark in such a manner, but they explained to her that the shark had intended to eat her up, and you may be sure that she felt extremely grateful to them for saving her from so dreadful a fate.

As they were thus talking, a low, dark line came stretching over the blue sky towards the islet, and the mermaids exclaimed, "Here comes Fleeting and his subjects," and at the same moment waves and her train appeared, to welcome her guests.

Goldie watched with delight while the column of birds broke into different companies, wheeling hither and thither as they neared the islet, their white and parti-colored wings gleaming like satin in the blue air, while one, larger than the rest, with snowy plumage and brilliant eyes surrounded with gold-colored rings, came swiftly forward to meet waves, who - gracefully poised on her rosy wings, and surrounded by her jets - advanced to

welcome him.

In an instant the islet was covered with birds, stretching their wings and arching their glittering necks after the fatigue of their journey, while they sought for berries to satisfy their hunger, and drank from the sparkling cascade.

After Fleeting had related his various adventures to the Gays, and partaken of honey and fruit, Louva said

"My dear Fleeting, there is a little mortal here, to whose sorrowing mother you must bear a token from her, in order that she may come and seek her."

Fleeting was much surprised on hearing this, and after long consultation between him and Louva, it was arranged that his subjects should remain on the islet, while he went to the country in which Goldie's mother lived, to bear her the token.

So a long, golden curl from Goldie's head was tied round his white neck, and when the sea and sky were pink with the first sunbeams on the following morning, he spread his white wings and flew away, the long, golden curl streaming behind him like a slender banner.

Knowing that Goldie's mother would soon come for the little one, Iwa and the Jays collected specimens of all the curiosities and treasures of their islet to bestow on her at parting. They wove for her on their looms of pearl a mantle from the silky, golden beads of the *pinna marina*, and piled on the beach little heaps of pearls and mounds of curious and beautiful shells of every shape and size. In large, hollow pearls they gathered the perfume of every flower growing on the islet, and inside a clear diamond they placed a firefly, thus forming a fairy lamp of exquisite brilliancy. From the most brilliant feathers of the humming birds they formed miniature fans, and in the chalice of a graceful pitcher plant they collected the golden honey with the assistance of the industrious bees.

In these kind offices the time wore quickly away, and little Goldie, while longing for the arrival of her mother, could not but feel extremely grieved at the idea of leaving the affectionate Iwa and her benevolent Jays, as well as the mermaids who had saved her from the fangs of master shark. The evening, not long after Flewings' departure, the Jays were

dancing merrily in the glow of the sunset, Erava and little Goldie  
watched them from under the jessamine, when Trumpet Flower,  
who had been on a trip to the top of the palm tree, came flitting  
back in great haste exclaiming.

"King Fleeting is returning, and after him comes a ship  
"with great white sails, and in it stands a woman with her  
"arms stretched out towards the islet, and she ceases not crying  
"Goldie, my little Goldie!"

As he spoke, Fleeting appeared, clearing the air swiftly with  
his strong wings, and quieting to the islet the white-sailed ship,  
on the deck of which stood Goldie's mother.  
Instantly some of the fays bore Goldie in their arms towards the  
bevel, others carrying the precious gifts bestowed upon her by their  
Queen, and in another moment she was clasped in the arms of her mother.

At first she thought of nothing but the exquisite joy of being  
restored to her parents embraces, but after a time she started, as a sound of  
melancholy music came quivering through the air, and looking up she  
perceived that the fays had disappeared, and that over the islet

hung a rose-colored cloud, completely hiding it from view.  
 As the ship sailed slowly away, bearing little Goldie and her mother to their own land, she heard the jays singing, hidden in the rosy mist, a sorrowful farewell, and she could not help weeping as she listened and thought of their sweet benevolence to her, and she waved her hand towards the islet crying "Farewell, dear Power! Farewell, kind Jays!"

And from the mist there came myriads of voices crying "Farewell! Little Goldie, farewell!"  
 When the moon rose the mermaids surrounded the ship, and sung wild spells to tame the heaving ocean.  
 So before many days little Goldie and her mother reached their own land in safety, but never again did the little one hear or see aught of the Fairy of the Shell or hear the songs of the mermaids.



## Appendix C.

"Aunt Dorry's Potpourri". Reproduction of a ms. by Isabella Valancy Crawford. Short story, probably written in the early 1870s. Original in the Isabella Valancy Crawford Papers, Lorne Pierce Collection, Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario.

(12)

Aunt Dorrey's Pot-pourri

You know what Pot-pourri is don't you? Just dried rose-leaves preserved in jars with salt and certain spices so very old fashioned that you hear of it away back in the Middle Ages, and I like it just as I do Rich, Rare Yellow old Rose point and Point-de-Frilly lace, and Rose de Parre China, and priceless Gubbs ware all whirled-and-gold and old "Crackling" china as they say, and old Crocades and queer old fans, because it is old and because Aunt Dorrey comes smiling out of the Past whenever I see or smell a dried rose leaf. Harry says Pot-pourri is a French dish, and they have Pot-pourris of the Opereas, but Aunt Dorrey's was just dried Rose leaves, and only for that very Pot-pourri his life would have been very different.

We have a little bit of family history such as it is. Papa was a Jeweller. He came to America when he was a lad to make his fortune and he did it too, and at fifty he had a pretty house, a neat carriage, money and all that. But he was over sixty and I sixteen before Aunt Dorrey then appeared in

the scene.

We had a miniature of Grandmother's attire when she was  
 a little girl, and on the back of it in deep pearls was her name  
 Guicla's noble grade, Brookhampton. She was an Carlo daughter  
 and eloped with the young Jeweller, whom his principal set-  
 tled one unlucky summer to him the Brookhampton pearls  
 having poor Lady Guicla's pictured face and knowing that  
 paper very much resembled his father. I have often drawn and  
 pictures of their meeting. Paper is of Spanish descent and Grand-  
 father with his name José Maria's hair was possessed all the dark  
 beauty of a Spanish and an Andalugo air which would have become  
 the streets of Madrid, and Lady Guicla was a lovely haired, sun-  
 daret-tipped, azure eyed beauty a Roman, not a Gascon or Florentine,  
 and as wild as the sea. Gen'l. Gove faced the scene.  
 A northern slope of Brookhampton park, bathed by a July sun,  
 José fleung on the turf, the Brookhampton pearls lying in their  
 fair locks, seeming to catch the yellow glorio of the sun and turn  
 it to a white steadfast splendor, the Chase's oak's gossiping be-  
 hind, the towers of Brookhampton rising bronze and grey.  
 3) Crick cut the pale English blue of the sky from the bowers

Behind, the Sussex hills like Sapphire creeparts still close  
 painted in the very arch of heaven, the sea a castles of living  
 gold fretted with fire, before the glancing of great atwaky  
 waxy eyes in the yellow crachese the long striking jaws in the  
 shadows of the shade the Hawthorn hedges like Great Virgins Ebed  
 in white and offering incense, the rookro with polished wings of jet-  
 sailing to and from the Elm Concho, the deep, deep contentful  
 depths of shade, the wide spread wealth of sunlight: Brock  
 -hampton towers stood on a shoulder of the Sussex hills  
 below one could see valley with fretted spires, hamlets, with  
 jewel glowing casements, needles walled incursion houses,  
 mellowing like pearls since the time of Queen Beas, and courtly  
 in magnificent minutes of ivy, dripping like cascades from  
 spout-and-gargoyle, pots, white as the Frochampton pearls  
 rising from pink turps of Hollyhockro, and the sails of ships  
 set-like pearls in the gold castles of ocean, the airy tower of a  
 grey old Minister like mist-against-the far ~~the~~ the  
 aster, roofs of a stately city clustered round its feet. From the  
 Michael Cathedral Jose Marian a charming beed protected  
 35) A letter case Aguree took over the readily hair and under

The dimpled cheek, the gorgon's gleam of a rainbow  
 brocade breaking in folds like of color in the vertical shade, the  
 slender ivory hand holding back the beauteous old Corgo, the other  
 holding a little bronze and black "King Charles" Agassiz's ~~the~~ skin  
 truly Cassel-baby's bubble, cut down by greedily on the boom, the  
 shining pores of the neck and shoulder covered with wealthy folds of  
 Arrow's old, - on the rose-pink arm the Great-Arcadian's hat  
 of rusted gold-hued straw over which what-~~they~~ would have  
 in those days a "low-pot" - of roses and French ~~seem~~ had been  
 emptied, hung by its goss strings, and under the petticoat of pale  
 brown rose-hued taffeta two little feet in "locked" silk stockings  
 and red heels, huge, rose-tint shoes. José Maria's hands a rustle  
 He turns and meets those blue Norman eyes, a Mad George's glow  
 a rich bloom into the dimpled, tinted woods of the face, Chas's old cloud  
 of Auburn's eyes let Agassiz's his chest as he rises and stars  
 into the blue - old, Chas's on whose edge were this brilliant  
 fainter creature stands, patens of pale gold brachae, deep-  
 shadows, silver feathers behind her, the sun on her brow, on  
 her lips 'bubble' than the cherry' parted as she gazes at him  
 1.) José Maria's ~~stands~~ against the sky ~~sun~~ and tall

In a peach-colored coat, unbrocaded at the seams, a  
 sword stick at his side and a horse pistol stuck in his belt.  
 His olive face becomes luminous, his long black eyes see a  
 dangerous vision, the "Polylic Flame" which the German Exiles  
 have quivers in a Lambert mist round his head, slowly a  
 like glory shines over his brow, the flames ~~are~~ incline, wave, blow  
 together and rise neglected towards the sky, they love at first  
 sight. It takes three weeks to give the Rockhampton pearls  
 white, priceless, balisques that they are, their full head of  
 beauty-preserving dew, and when José Maria rides back to  
 "Lunnon" as they called "Duch Town" then, he makes a moon-  
 light-letting, and as the midnight-moon disperses her  
 sick of golden mist, and sails above the tops of hills, he is  
 galloping through mud filled Hawthorn bungaloes, over rut-  
 ted highway, across stables grey with soot, by old Church-  
 yards, round sleeping huddles, his horse plod and bridle  
 in the kennel, his other grasping a shapeless bundle in  
 puffer and hood clinging with hair arms round his neck  
 and coat, while behind blindly feeling into the distance  
 a white gleam shows where the moonlight strokes when

the latest of Brookhampton Papers. Antwerp was the nest of Episcopians and Jewellers in those days, and further fair jobs. Maria and Lady Hilda <sup>his wife</sup> and her <sup>husband's</sup> <sup>children</sup> for many a year in an old house. By a quarrel with a richly careered, richly need-  
 less <sup>brother</sup> <sup>William</sup> <sup>Wright</sup> hanging over the pavement - and little case -  
 after twenty years <sup>of</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>same</sup> <sup>kind</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>life</sup> <sup>with</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>same</sup> <sup>kind</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>care</sup> <sup>and</sup> <sup>concern</sup>, there  
 after twenty years <sup>of</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>same</sup> <sup>kind</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>life</sup> <sup>with</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>same</sup> <sup>kind</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>care</sup> <sup>and</sup> <sup>concern</sup>, there  
 Maria died, and paper as I have said came to America to  
 seek his fortune. The Earlom of Brookhampton was what they  
 term in Scotland a "feucall feif" which means that title  
 and estate, in default of males, <sup>was</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>be</sup> <sup>held</sup> <sup>by</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>female</sup> <sup>heir</sup>.  
 and Lady Hilda & Elizabeth on the Earl's death became  
 Countess of Brookhampton, married and had children, and  
 paper kept up his knowledge of the family <sup>throughout</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>ages</sup> <sup>so</sup> <sup>far</sup> <sup>known</sup>  
 that the present holder of the title was an <sup>unhappy</sup> <sup>man</sup>.  
 Lady whose heir was a <sup>young</sup> <sup>man</sup> of <sup>the</sup> <sup>same</sup> <sup>name</sup>. You can find out  
 and too. Things in <sup>the</sup> <sup>past</sup> <sup>are</sup> <sup>very</sup> <sup>interesting</sup> and very stupid  
 reading it so I must say, and awfully <sup>interesting</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>read</sup>  
 (1) who were <sup>very</sup> <sup>faithfully</sup> <sup>recorded</sup> <sup>there</sup>

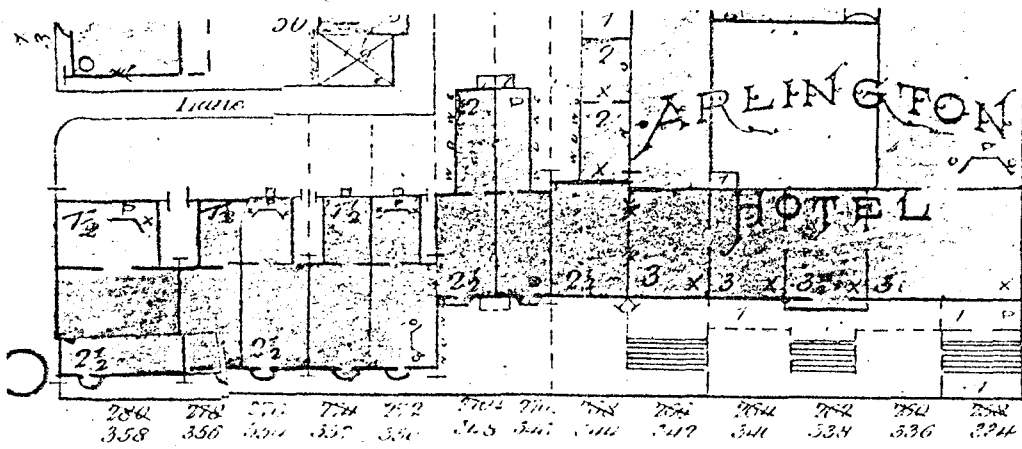
I remember I used to dream about those wonderful  
 Brookheampton people, and I called my doll Lady Helen and  
 my little Noah in the gasless Brookheampton. Of course  
 I was called ~~Elizabeth~~ Hidalgo but my hair instead of the normal  
 red gold - was the color of the edges of people under clouds a kind of  
 spectral glory very ~~immaculate~~ I thought beside the like coloring of  
 Quirida's robes and my eyes were like papa's Spanish black and  
 sparkling as though <sup>cut</sup> in a thousand facets like diamonds. I came  
 out at eighteen and my very first winter Harry Latimer proposed  
 to me and we were engaged on condition that we were not to marry  
 until I was twenty-one. I think that is all about this part of my story  
 except that I met my we lived just out of New York in a lovely  
 place with a large ~~land~~ pearl white facade facing in a noble street  
 lawn and fields ~~strown out~~ by a living background of dark  
 dark pines, and that we were the gayest and happiest family  
 I think in all America.



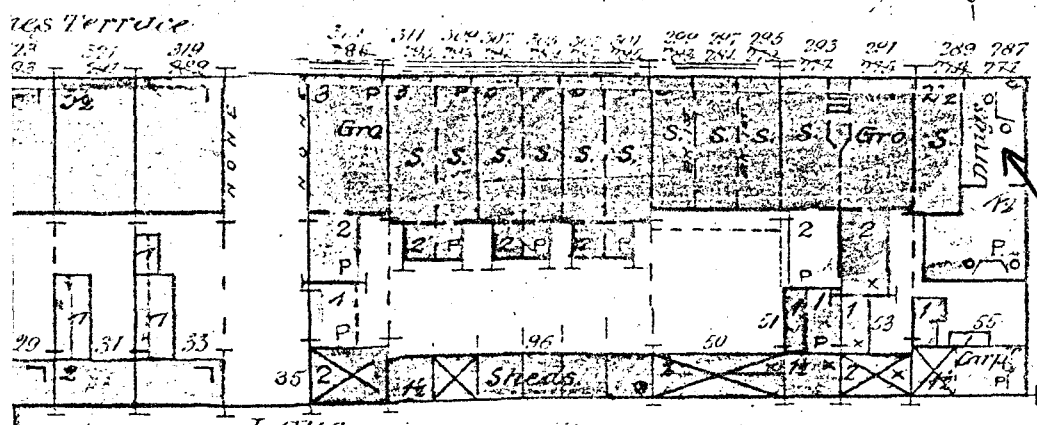
## Appendix D.

Reproduction of items relating to Isabella Valancy Crawford's stay in Toronto.

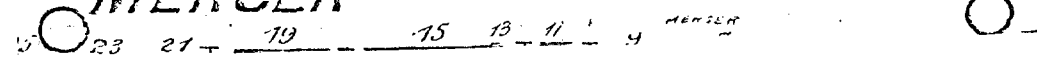
- i) Reproduction of map of Toronto from Goad's Index to the Insurance Plan of the City of Toronto March, 1882, sheet #63. This includes the corner of King and John Sts, the residence of Crawford at the time of her death.
- ii) Reproduction of a page from the notebook with the blue marbled cover, showing a writing lesson for Stephen Walter Crawford. The model line at the top is probably in the hand of Sydney Scott Crawford.
- iii) Reproduction of the first page of the same notebook. The hand appears to be that of the teacher of the writing lesson and is quite different from the hand of Isabella Valancy Crawford, as seen in Appendices A, B and C. I believe it to indicate that Sydney Scott Crawford, Valancy's mother, wrote the fragments attributed to her in the bibliography of this thesis. Original in the Isabella Valancy Crawford Papers, Lorne Pierce Collection, Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario.
- iv) Letter to Isabella Valancy Crawford from the editor of Pictorial Times. This is the only piece of Crawford's correspondence known to be extant. It was written less than two weeks before her death. Original in memorandum book in the Isabella Valancy Crawford Papers, Lorne Pierce Collection, Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario.



WEST



MERCER



14

(77')

JOHN

57 John S

(75')



①

- After a few weeks I'm in that I forget of other
- time began to feel a little better on the hands of
- my mother, more especially, as the summer was
- unusually warm, and in consequence a cold
- soon followed at the hotel table, of the country,
- was referred to doctor as usual.
- had just eaten as usual ~~was~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~house~~
- exercise by the constant <sup>commanding</sup> ~~keeping~~ <sup>kept</sup>
- up by him, among the balls, and other kinds
- feet <sup>commanded</sup> <sup>with</sup> <sup>that</sup> <sup>much</sup> <sup>admired</sup> <sup>you</sup>
- when <sup>the</sup> <sup>men</sup> <sup>are</sup>, <sup>though</sup> <sup>it</sup> <sup>will</sup> <sup>be</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>same</sup>

ARMSTRONG 1592, NOTRE-DAME  
 PHOTO+ENGRAVING+CO.  
 MONTREAL

Montreal, Jan 31 1887

Madame.

Your story "From  
 the Heart of a Maple" is very  
 acceptable, but for the present we  
 are limited by space to short-  
 sketches not exceeding beyond 2 or  
 2½ columns. We might use your  
 contribution a little later on,  
 as we enlarge our room, and  
 if you choose to leave with us  
 till then, we shall be happy to  
 publish it.

Very Respectfully  
 Yours O. J. D.

Isabelle B. Crawford.

Editor  
 Pictorial Times

## Appendix E.

"In the Breast of a Maple". Reproduction of a ms. by Isabella Valancy Crawford. Short story, probably written toward the end of her life. See letter in Appendix D regarding this story. Original in the Isabella Valancy Crawford Papers, Lorne Pierce Collection, Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario.

A Bar of Sunset

written for Pictorial

By Isabella Blaney Crawford

In the Breast of a People.

"~~Madeleineville - Madeleineville~~ ~~Madame!~~"

"Madeleineville leaned on her axe handle -  
her black brows frowned, contracted."

"Madeleineville! Mam'selle! dear Mam'selle  
de Henry - listen to me. Stop chopping, woman  
and listen to me, for the love of Heaven."

Madeleineville de Henry's fine jaw became  
~~hard~~ steel, her raven brows contracted,  
she fixed her focussed feet in the

Snow as a pine strikes its roots into  
 the earth: she threw out her arms in  
 a noble curve, and again, <sup>bright as</sup> ~~like~~ a sharp  
 young moon, her heavy old head buried  
 itself in the breast of the maple: her  
 broad bosom swelled at the power of the  
 stroke, a proud crimson dappled her cheeks  
 and then settled into the level, satin-red  
 of <sup>a</sup> rose - her large nostrils swelled and grew  
 fixed as marble, ~~her~~ <sup>her</sup> lips one snowy tooth  
 longer than its fellows bit into her  
 full under lip. Her steady black eyes looked  
 implacably at her sturdy foe, the maple.  
 "The half hour and I shall have my  
 foot on ~~his~~ <sup>its</sup> neck!" she said aloud.  
 "Mademoiselle! dear Mademoiselle de Henry  
 stop chopping for the sake of the blessed  
 Saints! and listen to me."



She eyed the gaping white wound in  
the bark. Swayed grandly back almost  
from her arched feet, and brought  
the blade sheer into the wound again.

"Mademoiselle, dear Mademoiselle de  
Meury - it is plain you will blind me -  
Behold - a chip struck my eye. Stop  
chopping, I conjure you - an adorable  
woman with an axe in her hand is  
an anomaly."

Mademoiselle de Meury let the head  
of her axe bury itself in the deep  
snow. She rested her pulsing hand on  
its handle as on a sceptre.

"I beg Monsieur Dalmas to accept my  
Excuses." She said; "also to accept the hint  
of the chip in his <sup>eye</sup> and retire."

"Mademoiselle. I will retire presently - 4  
 Where you have told me where I shall  
 find that miserable ass, my son Jean".

"I do not know, Monsieur Dalmas."

"A wretched fable, woman! you profess  
 ignorance to annoy me. I will appeal  
 to the law - you shall tell where he is in  
 the courts - your scheming baggage of a  
 Sister -"

Mademoiselle de Meury's knee moved under  
 her clinging woollen skirt, showing itself  
 boldly like that joint in the statue of  
 the Venus de Milo - her face took the  
 white glitter of an icicle - her muscles  
 grew large as a man's as she grasped

18 In the Breast of a Snake

The handle of her axe - she swung <sup>(5)</sup>  
towards him, third leg deep in snow.  
"Begone!" she said.

Monsieur Dalmas in moments of fear  
had joints flexible as those of a kid.  
He leaped back with the agility of the  
"Master Rabbit" of the Algonquin story  
tellers, and fell headlong into a naked  
tangle of underbrush behind him.

Mademoiselle de Meury stood for a second  
gawking at him; <sup>she felt</sup> and feeling her sleek axe-  
-handle mechanically.

"Begone!" she at length found breath to  
repeat.

Monsieur Dalmas looked at her out of  
the knot of brush in which he sat

very uncomfortably indeed partially <sup>so</sup>  
 impaled on little naked spikes.  
 "Mademoiselle de Neury," he said <sup>pleasantly</sup> "there is  
 none of the alluring softness of the divine  
 Sex about you. I deplore the fact, and I  
 - retire!"

She was again alone.

Her yoked <sup>red</sup> oxen patiently trampled the  
 forest-snow, and made sweet, rude music  
~~and~~ <sup>clanking</sup> the great logging chains attached to  
 them: the St. Lawrence <sup>flowed mightily</sup> ~~flowed~~ below her, its  
 ice banks groaning and thundering in  
 the still, sharp air: the sky was like an  
 inverted <sup>turquoise</sup> ~~crystal~~ goblet - ~~through~~ which  
~~she~~ poured a golden wine over a  
 silver world. Through the naked inter-  
 -lacements of the bush, a sunniness old

Stone house, ~~half-destroyed~~ showed its  
 walls melancholy grey walls to which  
 clung the skeleton ~~lean~~ fingers of ~~dead~~ <sup>garey</sup> vines. On a bluff roll of land on  
 the other hand, a fine modern mansion  
 dominated the scene - the residence of Mon<sup>o</sup>-  
 Dalmas.

Chopping  
 Mademoiselle de Meury returned to her.  
 Her axe swung with the regularity of  
 a pendulum, and its ~~regular~~ <sup>regular</sup> beats  
 built echoing edifices of sound in the  
~~dead~~ supernatural stillness of the forest.

She worked with such mechanical  
 steadiness that before very long the  
 thrilling of her axe told her that the  
 noble tree was beginning to <sup>yield</sup> its fibres

to it. She dropped her weapon, as an Amazon her spear, and walked away to obtain a full view of her foe.

"It will fall clear to the north." She said  
 "It will fall clear to the west." Said a voice behind her.

Madeleine de Meury wheeled round on her strong foot, like a female Mercury,

"Jean Dalmas!" She ~~saw~~ said "Thou! I thought it was a Me-se-gish, <sup>Indian</sup> a spirit of the air, at my ear. Jean!"

"And Lucille & Marie?"

"Lucille - well, without doubt she will <sup>now</sup> recover since thou art returned."

The young man placed his foot on a log to vault over it; his eyes burned on the old house showing mournfully through the trees.

"Let us go to her!" he cried impetuously.

2892 66784 (8)

"Go there," said Mademoiselle de Meury smiling joyously at him. "See, she is coming to seek me - thou wilt meet her."

He went with the straight-bow of a deer to meet the slender figure flitting with the gentle step of a ghost in and out through the trees towards them.

"It is like wine to see one so strong, so vigorous, so brilliant as you." thought Mademoiselle de Meury, maternally. "I wonder where he has been during this melancholy year. Ah, my little sister, earth will keep thee after all, thank the good God."

She smiled, with such sweetness that two dimples shone like little lights by

Lips. Two tears, splendid with clear fire  
rolled like waves over the large globes  
of her eyes.

"Rebe! Diana! what tenderness! What  
Grace! What power! Divine Mademoiselle  
de Newry, have compassion on your slave  
who adores you! ~~you will neither~~ if  
you will not accept the impetuous  
adoration of a heart-fired by your  
charms, at least tell me where I  
may find that miserable Ass, my  
Son Jean."

Monsieur Dalemas had ventured back;  
he stood entrenched behind a tree  
round which he peered cautiously at  
the leader of the } axe. A fur collar surrounded  
his <sup>little</sup> head, ~~to~~ his thin nose protruded

9



Like a Snipe's bill from its recesses. (10)

Mademoiselle de Meury's lips parted exquisitely in a slow smile. She lifted her long massive round arm, and pointed into the woods.

"Monsieur Dalmas." She said, ironically "there is your son: he is just returned."

Monsieur Dalmas bounded like a squirrel, but still remained in his shelter.

"And that is Mademoiselle Lucille with the irreclaimable Zany! I will stop this! I will exert my authority! Embraces! Kisses! Toasts of Mades! and before me."

"A year's absence from Lucille has tried his faith." Said Mademoiselle de Meury "Jean is constant, so is Lucille. They will

"Narry - Monsieur Dalmas, I am about to bring down my tree. Should it happen to fall on you the misfortune would be very grave - to yourself."

Madeleine de Henry had miscalculated the resistance of the tree: even as she spoke it groaned horribly, and increasing the sound to a roar as its fibres parted, staggered and toppled towards her.

She sprang for her life: the skeleton branches struck the ground almost at her feet; a tremendous flurry of snow and broken twigs rose up around her, hiding her for a second in a little whirlwind of confusion.

Jean and Lucille ran up swift, and white with terror. Lucille threw

her transparent hands round  
 her sister's neck. Lucille had all the  
 exquisite beauty and splendid delicacy  
 of a morning glory, and ~~the~~ <sup>also with</sup> clinging  
~~delicate~~ tendrils.

"We thought thou wert hurt. That the  
 maple fell on thee, my sister". She said  
 tremulously. "What a frightful jar in the  
 midst of our happiness!"

Monsieur Dalcens danced a pas seul  
 of anger, still behind his tree; his only  
 child Jean, his heir, stood before him  
 holding Lucille in one arm, Marie de  
 Meury in the other. Marie pushed the  
 young fellow aside carelessly,

"Our wood is out -" she said. "I must haul my log home; and thou, Jean, shalt cut it into firewood for us." 13

Jean had not perceived his father; he seized the axe and flourished it.

"Let me trim off the boughs - and see; I will ~~cut~~<sup>chip</sup> it in two. The tree is too long and mouldy to drag through this bush where there is no path; permit me, my sister."

Mourieu Dalmas peeped out at him first round one side of the tree, then round the other. Jean leaped on the fallen tree, and the chips flew as his axe fell.

"~~His~~" The donkey's jaw has become

"Very resolute since last year," said  
 Monsieur Dalmas, "very possibly he will  
~~not~~ kick harder than ever against my  
 commands. Well - he shall choose between  
 Mademoiselle Lucille and my purse. What  
 a fool Mademoiselle de Mery is when by  
 accepting my ardent and respectful  
 homage she could end all this and  
 make the little Lucille happy - but  
 women are such captives."

Mademoiselle de Mery and Lucille,  
 their arms round each other, stood  
 looking proudly at the strong and  
 handsome young man mounted on  
 the palfrey. Marie made a tantalizing

posture behind Lucille's white neck 15  
 at the spy. Monsieur Dalmas replied by  
 kissing his ~~wife's~~ <sup>two</sup> ~~cheek~~ <sup>knives</sup> to her, and  
 laying it tenderly on his heart, ~~at~~  
~~back where his aches.~~ He did not  
 dare to venture out to encounter  
 these three resolute young people,  
 all dead in the easy armour of love,  
 and a little fierce in their fulness of  
<sup>two of them, Jean and Marie,</sup>  
 strength and pride: He yet felt unable  
 to tear himself away from contemplating  
 the Mademoiselle de Neuvy, who stood in  
 her shabby, clinging woollen gown like  
 a large strong rose born to bloom in  
 rejoice in, and ~~repent~~ <sup>perfume</sup> the cold crystal  
 Canadian air. 804

She noticed him no more, it  
 accused her to know he was looking  
 behind that tree, gnashing his teeth  
 at her little Lucille's blush of happiness,  
 at the broad light of joy in Jean's  
 eyes as he chopped away lustily  
 towering above them on the bench.

Suddenly Jean paused.

"They are turned," he exclaimed "there is  
 some bit of metal imbedded in the  
 heart of the tree."

"Chop round it, there," suggested Madeline  
 de Mery. "it is probably a nail - one  
 sometimes meets a foreign substance  
 imbedded in a tree one falls."

"Adorable and ferocious wood nymph" <sup>14</sup>  
 murmured (Monsieur) Dalmas, behind  
 the tree. "How if she would only  
 consent to become Jean's stepmother  
 how delightfully things would arrange  
 themselves: <sup>In the name of Venus</sup> She could not be always  
 armed with an axe!"

Jean chopped on, ~~singing as resolutely~~  
 the chips flew in a large radius.  
 "Ha!" he exclaimed. "here is a mystery -  
 I have discovered something."

He began to chop more carefully  
 with fine little strokes, his eyes contracted  
 looking at something.

"Here it is!" he cried at last, and  
 shaking the object clear from the  
 14



would

Aunt about it held it up.

(15)

A broad band of Sunlight fell across it. Mademoiselle de Mery screamed like an eagle: She pushed Lucille from her, she clasped her hands, and held them strained-above her head.

"It is my dead father's lost pocket-book." she cried. "And - And - Jean, Lucille! the receipt is in it!"

Jean became ghastly pale. he leaped from the cloven trunk, and handed the faded object to Marie: A stout antique, redwooden pocket book with many steel clasps guarding it.

"Open it." he said hoarsely. "I cannot."

Monsieur Dalmas shuddering himself by starting from tree to tree, bearded like an ugly little yellow fog, the sweat rolling down his face and body in streams.

"This is a pretty finale," he muttered "that Anceyon will insist on my retirement to the penitentiary - Unless Lucille should intervene for Jean's sake. Well, Mademoiselle Lucille will probably do so, and I may simply rest easy, and go home to my dinner - Jean will be a very plausible advocate to leave with two charming young women."

Jean's advocacy was simple silence. Mademoiselle de Meury tore open the

19

pocket book, a folded paper full (20  
- from it.

"Listen!" she cried "Oh, my poor father!"  
She read it aloud ringingly, triumphant  
for a moment forgetful of Jean.

It was a ~~final~~ receipt for ten  
thousand dollars, the amount of  
a mortgage due on their place of  
de Meury and held by Monsieur Dalmas.  
<sup>fifteen years before</sup>  
An unexpected legacy had enabled  
Monsieur de Meury to lift this lien on  
his estate: he had paid the money  
to Monsieur Dalmas, and returning  
through the book had dropped the book  
containing the letters <sup>in the snow</sup> receipt. On his

arrival at home, his death illness, (4)  
 a sharp inflammation, attacked him,  
 before he <sup>opened</sup> his pocketbook  
 and the next day he lay dead.  
 Monsieur Dalmeas ~~opened~~ <sup>denied</sup> the lost  
 receipt (and took possession of de  
 Meury, leaving the widow, and her  
 two orphan ~~and~~ children to fight  
 the wolf on their threshold. Madame  
 de Meury ~~was~~ <sup>had</sup> ~~dead~~ <sup>died</sup> five years after  
 her husband, and Marie and Luille  
 had continued the battle with all  
 the pride and courage of their race.

Jean Dalmeas had fallen in love,  
 very naturally, with lovely Luille,  
 and after a stormy scene with his

father, one year before, had rushed <sup>22</sup>  
 desperately away to make a home for  
 the sweet young girl or perish in the  
 attempt. With the jolly of a very young  
 man, he left <sup>his</sup> without word or sign  
 during that melancholy year, and  
 she had pined herself to a charming  
 little phantom in her mustiness,  
 not as to his affection, but as  
 to his fate. Affairs were complicated  
 for the lovers by Monsieur Dalmas  
 growing infatuation for that grand  
 and stately Woodruff, Marie  
 de Meurey, who now stood, the

of his guilt in ~~the~~ her triumphant <sup>22</sup>  
hand, her eyes blazing, her head  
reared like a stag.

"Infamous, contemptible wretch!" she  
said, haughtily.

Jack sighed bitterly, a sound deadened  
by Lucille's hand on his mouth, by  
Marie's massive arm about his neck.  
"My beloved," whispered Lucille, adoringly.  
"My brother," said Marie, affectionately.

They stood thus for a moment in  
perfect silence, Jack's <sup>own</sup> glorious and  
noble soul taking comfort from <sup>the</sup> their  
trust and tenderness of theirs.

"Come!" said Mademoiselle de  
Mery, smiling. ~~With Pierre and Jean~~  
22

And Plutarch to our Log - it <sup>(23)</sup>  
 is time to go home. "Leuille and Jean  
 there is no more dread of Monsieur  
 Dalmas wrath - from the heart of  
 the Maple the good God has given us  
 wherewithal to spare his nails. Come,  
 my friends."

The indescribable glory of a Canadian  
 winter sunset broke through the  
 woods; the snow became fields of  
 rose, the trees stood one half ruby  
 the other jet; the arch above was  
 delicately green with a noble moon  
 making a silver day in it.

The Log groaned as Solon and

Plutarh dragged it through the  
 woods, and on it <sup>in state</sup> sat Lucille and  
 Marie, laughing and singing, while  
 Jean guided the big-eyed New  
<sup>home</sup> through the exquisite and splendid  
 shadows and lights.

Later in the evening a servant  
 brought to the old house

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