

HISTORIC RED HOOK

Clara Pritchard, L.L.D.

Born Aug 1892 Died – Jul 2, 1916

Clarissa Pritchard, L.L.D.

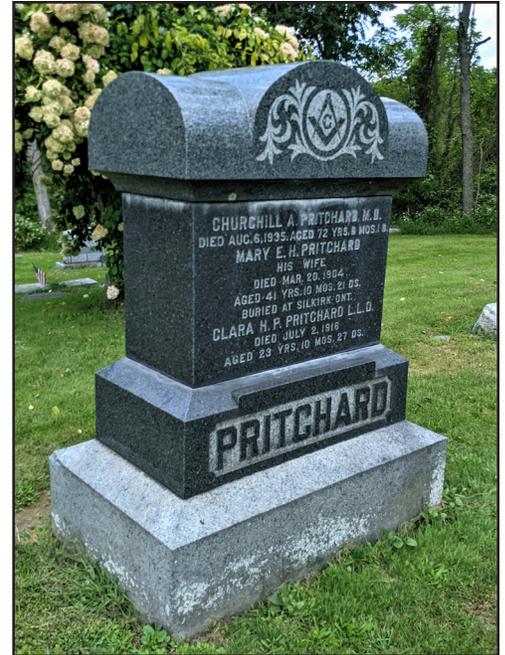
Born 1892 Died Oct 8, 1969

Old Red Church Cemetery, Tivoli

Grey granite monument with big Mason symbol toward the northwest of the cemetery.

Twin Lawyers

Clara and Clarissa Pritchard were born in August of 1892, fraternal twin daughters of Mary E.H. and Dr. Churchill Pritchard of Ontario, Canada, who resided in Tivoli. Their father was a doctor, and their mother was one of the first (if not perhaps the first) female lawyer



NEW YORK HERALD, SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 1914.—MAGAZINE SECTION.

Twins Are Youngest Women Lawyers in New York State



to be admitted to the Dutchess County bar. She had an office at 50 Market Street in Poughkeepsie. She was appointed to the southern district court of New York on January 26, 1904, but died just two months later on March 20, 1904, at only 39 years of age. She left her husband and 11-year-old daughters and was buried, presumably with her family, back in Ontario.

The twins attended high school in Tivoli. As it came time to decide what they would do with their lives, their father encouraged them to take after their mother. They studied law in Albany for two years, then worked in the field for one year before taking and passing the bar exam in

Dutchess County in November of 1913 at just 21 years of age. In the magazine section of the New York Herald of January 4, 1914, these young women were featured in an article about their achievement. Clara was quoted as saying that there was “a wide field for a woman in the practice of law” and that men in the field had “always been most considerate” to them. The article said they were also accomplished musicians, “have always been of a literary turn” and believed in women’s suffrage. At the time they were not sure where they would set up their practice but were thinking about being partners.

Clara took ill with diphtheria and died just two years after the Herald article in 1916 in Tivoli. Clarissa continued to practice law and married Eusebio López Agosta who was originally from Puerto Rico. She lived a long life and died in 1969 at 77 years of age.

Research and writing by Sarah K. Hermans, 2021

Sources:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/209572189/clara-pritchard>

New York Herald, 4 Jan 1914

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/133413283/eusebio-lopez_acosta

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/167920803/reynold-l-l%C3%B3pez_pritchard

Red Hook Journal, 14 Aug 1903

Red Hook Journal, 23 Oct 1903

NYS Death Index 1862-1948

1900 Federal Census, Red Hook, Dutchess Co NY, Churchill A Pritchard

NY Marriage Index Clarissa Pritchard m. Ensebio Lopez Acosta at Tivoli 8 Jul 1915