Prairie Fires: The American Dreams of Laura Ingalls Wilder

Caroline Fraser

WSC New Books 813.52 W645X

A deeply researched and elegantly written portrait of Laura Ingalls Wilder, author of the Little House on the Prairie series, that describes how Wilder transformed her family’s story of poverty, failure and struggle into an uplifting tale of self-reliance, familial love and perseverance.

Millions of readers of “Little House on the Prairie” believe they know Laura Ingalls—the pioneer girl who survived blizzards and near-starvation on the Great Plains, and the woman who wrote the famous autobiographical books. But the true saga of her life has never been fully told. Now, drawing on unpublished manuscripts, letters, diaries, and land and financial records, Caroline Fraser—the editor of the Library of America edition of the Little House series—masterfully fills in the gaps in Wilder’s biography. Revealing thegrown-up story behind the most influential childhood epic of pioneer life, she also chronicles Wilder’s tumultuous relationship with her journalistdaughter, Rose Wilder Lane, setting the record straight regarding waves of royal treatment, Rose Wilder Lane, setting the record straight regarding.

The Little House books, for all the hardships they describe, are paeans to the pioneer spirit, portraying it as triumphant against all odds. But Wilder’s real life was harder and grittier than that, a story of relentless struggle, rootlessness, and poverty. It was only in her sixties, after losing nearly everything in the Great Depression, that she turned to children’s books, recasting her hard-scrabble childhood as a celebratory vision of homesteading—and achieving fame and fortune in the process, in one of the most astonishing rags-to-riches episodes in American letters.

Spanning nearly a century of epochal change, from the Indian Wars to the Dust Bowl, Wilder’s dramatic life provides a unique perspective on American history and our national mythology of familial love and perseverance. With fresh insights and new discoveries, “Prairie Fires” reveals the complex woman whose classic stories grip us to the core.

**U.S. Conn Library - 111 Main St Wayne, NE 68787
402-275-7258
ashlibrary@wsu.edu
www.wsu.edu/library

---

**NEW BOOKS**

WSC 
813.52 W645X

---

**Pulitzer Prize**

---

**Wayne State University College**

---

**Last Update: 11/20/2018**

---

---
The Pulitzer Prize is a U.S. award for achievements in newspaper journalism, literature and musical composition. It was established by Joseph Pulitzer and is administered by Columbia University in New York City. Prizes are awarded yearly in twenty-one categories. In twenty of these, each winner receives a certificate and a $10,000 cash reward.

The award for biography or autobiography is given for a distinguished and appropriately documented biography or autobiography by an American author.