

# Five Minute Stories

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[Illustrated]



# Five Minute Stories

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By

**Laura E. Richards**



**Illustrator:**

A. R. Wheelan & E. B. Barry

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## Laura E. Richards

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**L**aura Elizabeth Howe Richards (1850 – 1943) was an American writer.

She was born in Boston, Massachusetts, to a high-profile family. During her life, she wrote over 90 books, including children's, biographies, poetry, and others. A well-known children's poem for which she is noted is the literary nonsense verse *Eletelephony*.

Her father was Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, an abolitionist and the founder of the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind. Samuel Gridley Howe's famous pupil Laura Bridgman was Laura's namesake.



Julia Ward Howe, Laura's mother, was famous for writing the words to The Battle Hymn of the Republic.

In 1871 Laura married Henry Richards. He would accept a management position in 1876 at his family's paper mill at Gardiner, Maine, where the couple moved with their three children.

In 1917 Laura won a Pulitzer Prize for *Julia Ward Howe, 1819-1910*, a biography, which she co-authored with her sister, Maud Howe Elliott. Her children's book *Tirra Lirra* won the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award in 1959.

A pre-kindergarten to second grade Elementary School in Gardiner, Maine honors her name.

### **Works:**

- *St. Nicholas Magazine* (contributed poetry)
- *Baby's Rhyme Book* (1878)
- *Babyhood: Rhymes and Stories, Pictures and Silhouettes for Our Little Ones* (1878)
- *Baby's Story Book* (1878)
- *Five Mice in a Mouse Trap* (1880)
- *The Little Tyrant* (1880)
- *Our Baby's Favorite* (1881)
- *Sketches and Scraps* (1881)
- *Baby Ways* (1881)
- *The Joyous Story of Toto* (1885)
- *Beauty and the Beast* (retelling, 1886)
- *Four Feet, Two Feet, and No Feet* (1886)
- *Hop o' My Thumb* (retelling, 1886)
- *Kaspar Kroak's Kaleidoscope* (1886)
- *L.E.R.* (privately printed, 1886)
- *Tell-Tale from Hill and Dale* (1886)
- *Toto's Merry Winter* (1887)
- *Julia Ward Howe Birthday-Book* (1889)
- *In My Nursery* (1890)
- *Captain January* (later made into a movie with Shirley Temple, 1891)

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- *Star Bright* (Captain January sequel, 1927)
- The Hildegarde Series
  - *Queen Hildegarde* (1889)
  - *Hildegarde's Holiday* (1891)
  - *Hildegarde's Home* (1892)
  - *Hildegarde's Neighbors* (1895)
  - *Hildegarde's Harvest* (1897)
- The Melody Series
  - *Melody* (1893)
  - *Marie* (1894)
  - *Bethsada Pool* (1895)
  - *Rosin the Beau* (1898)
- The Margaret Series
  - *Three Margarets* (1897)
  - *Margaret Montfort* (1898)
  - *Peggy* (1899)
  - *Rita* (1900)
  - *Fernley House* (1901)
  - *The Merryweathers* (1904)
- *Glimpses of the French Court* (1893)
- *When I Was Your Age* (1893)
- *Narcissa, or the Road to Rome* (1894)
- *Five Minute Stories* (1895)
- *Jim of Hellas, or In Durance Vile* (1895)
- *Nautilus* (1895)
- *Isla Heron* (1896)
- *"Some Say" and Neighbors in Cyrus* (1896)
- *The Social Possibilities of a Country Town* (1897)
- *Love and Rocks* (1898)
- *Chop-Chin and the Golden Dragon* (1899)
- *Quicksilver Sue* (1899)
- *The Golden-Breasted Kootoo* (1899)
- *Sundown Songs* (1899)
- *For Tommy and Other Stories* (1900)
- *Snow-White, or The House in the Wood* (1900)

- *Geoffrey Strong* (1901)
- *Mrs. Tree* (1902)
- *The Hurdy-Gurdy* (1902)
- *More Five Minute Stories* (1903)
- *The Green Satin Gown* (1903)
- *The Tree in the City* (1903)
- *Mrs. Tree's Will* (1905)
- *The Armstrongs* (1905)
- *The Piccolo* (1906)
- *The Silver Crown, Another Book of Fables* (1906)
- *At Gregory's House* (1907)
- *Grandmother, the Story of a Life that Never was Lived* (1907)
- *Ten Ghost Stories* (1907)
- *The Pig Brother, and Other Fables and Stories* (1908)
- *The Wooing of Calvin Parks* (1908)
- *A Happy Little Time* (1910)
- *Up to Calvin's* (1910)
- *On Board the Mary Sands* (1911)
- *Jolly Jingles* (1912)
- *Miss Jimmy* (1913)
- *The Little Master* (1913)
- *Three Minute Stories* (1914)
- *The Pig Brother Play-Book* (1915)
- *Fairy Operettas* (1916)
- *Pippin, a Wandering Flame* (1917)
- *A Daughter of Jehu* (1918)
- *To Arms! Songs of the Great War* (1918)
- *Honor Bright: A Story for Girls* (1920)
- *In Blessed Cyrus* (1921)
- *The Squire* (1923)
- *Acting Charades* (1924)
- *Seven Oriental Operettas* (1924)
- *Honor Bright's New Adventure* (1925)
- Biographies

## *Five Minute Stories*

- *Letter and Journals of Samuel Gridley Howe* (Vol. I: 1906, Vol. II: 1909)
- *Florence Nightingale: Angel of the Crimea* (1909)
- *Two Noble Lives: Samuel Gridley Howe and Julia Ward Howe* (1911)
- *Julia Ward Howe, 1819-1910* (1915)
- *Elizabeth Fry, the Angel of the Prisons* (1916)
- *Abigail Adams and Her Times* (1917)
- *Joan of Arc* (1919)
- *Laura Bridgman: The Story of an Opened Door* (1928)
- *Stepping Westward* (1931)
- *Tirra Lirra: Rhymes Old and New* (1932)
- *Merry-Go-Round: New Rhymes and Old* (1935)
- *E. A. R.* (1936)
- *Please! Rhymes of Protest* (1936)
- *Harry in England* (1937)
- *I Have a Song to Sing You* (1938)
- *The Hottentot and Other Ditties* (1939)
- *What Shall the Children Read* (1939)
- *Laura E. Richards and Gardiner* (a compilation of poems and articles, 1939)

# FIVE MINUTE STORIES

BY

LAURA E. RICHARDS

Author of "Captain January," "Melody," "Narcissa,"  
"Marie," "Nautilus," Etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY

A. R. WHEELAN, E. B. BARRY

AND OTHERS.

BOSTON

*Copyright, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895,*

TO  
JOHN AND BETTY

# BETTY.



When I sit and hold her little hand,  
My Betty,  
Then all the little troubles seem to shrink,  
Grow small and petty.

## *Five Minute Stories*

It does not matter any more  
That ink is spilt on parlor floor,  
That gown is caught upon the latch,  
And not the smallest bit to match,  
That cook is going, housemaid gone,  
And coming guests to meet alone;  
It matters not at all, you see,  
For I have Betty, and Betty has me.  
When I sit and hold her little hand,  
My Betty,  
Then all the simple, foolish baby talk  
Grows wise and witty.  
I'm glad to know that Pussy Mow  
Was frightened at the wooden cow,  
I weep for Dolly's broken head,  
And for the sawdust she has shed;  
I take with joy the cups of tea  
From wooden teapot poured for me,  
And all goes well, because, you see,  
I play with Betty, and Betty with me.  
When I walk and hold her little hand,  
My Betty,  
Then every humble weed beside the way  
Grows proud and pretty.



The clover never was so red,  
Their purest white the daisies spread,  
The buttercups begin to dance,  
The reeds salute with lifted lance,  
The very tallest trees we pass  
Bend down to greet my little lass;  
And these things make my joy, you see,  
For I love Betty, and Betty loves me!

## TWO CALLS.

---

Beau Philip and Beau Bobby stood side by side on the doorstep of their father's house. They were brothers, though you would hardly have thought it, for one was very big and one was very little.

Beau Philip was tall and slender, with handsome dark eyes, and a silky brown moustache which he was fond of curling at the ends. He wore a well-fitting overcoat, and a tall hat and pearl-gray kid gloves.

Beau Bobby was short and chubby, and ten years old, with blue eyes and yellow curls (not long ones, but funny little croppy locks that *would* curl, no matter how short he kept them). He wore a pea-jacket, and red leggings and red mittens.

There was one thing, however, about the two brothers that was just the same. Each carried in his hand a great red rose, lovely and fragrant, with crimson leaves and a golden heart.

"Where are you going with your rose, Beau Bobby?" asked Beau Philip.

"I am going to make a New Year's call," replied Beau Bobby.

"So am I," said Beau Philip, laughing. "We may meet again. Good-by, little Beau!"

"Good-by, big Beau!" said Bobby, seriously, and they walked off in different directions.

Beau Philip went to call on a beautiful young lady, to whom he wished to give his rose; but so many other people were calling on her at the same time that he could only say "good-morning!" to her, and then stand in a corner, pulling his moustache and wishing that the others would go. There were so many roses in the room, bowls and vases and

jars of them, that he thought she would not care for his single blossom, so he put it in his buttonhole; but it gave him no pleasure whatever.

Beau Bobby trotted away on his short legs till he came to a poor street, full of tumble-down cottages.

He stopped before one of them and knocked at the door. It was opened by a motherly looking Irish woman, who looked as if she had just left the washtub, as, indeed, she had.

“Save us!” she cried, “is it yersilf, Master Bobby? Come in, me jewel, and warm yersilf by the fire! It’s mortal cowl’d the day.”

“Oh, I’m not cold, thank you!” said Bobby. “But I will come in. Would you—would you like a rose, Mrs. Flanagan? I have brought this rose for you. And I wish you a Happy New Year. And thank you for washing my shirts so nicely.”

This was a long speech for Beau Bobby, who was apt to be rather silent; but it had a wonderful effect on Mrs. Flanagan. She grew very red as she took the rose, and the tears came into her eyes.

“Ye little angil!” she said, wiping her eyes with her apron. “Look at the lovely rose! For me, is it? And who sint ye wid it, honey?”

“Nobody!” said Bobby. “I brought it myself. It was my rose. You see,” he said, drawing his stool up to the little stove, “I heard you say, yesterday, Mrs. Flanagan, when you brought my shirts home, that you had never had a New Year’s call in your life; so I thought I would make you one to-day, you see. Happy New Year!”

“Happy New Year to yersilf, me sweet jewel!” cried good Mrs. Flanagan. “And blessings go wid every day of it, for your kind heart and your sweet face. I had a sore spot in my heart this day, Master Bobby, bein’ so far from my own people; but it’s you have taken it away this minute, wid yer sweet rose and yer bright smile. See now, till I put it in my best chiny taypot. Ain’t that lovely, now?”

*Five Minute Stories*

“Isn’t it!” cried Beau Bobby. “And it makes the whole room sweet. I am enjoying my call *very* much, Mrs. Flanagan; aren’t you?”

“That I am!” said Mrs. Flanagan. “With all my heart!”

## A NEW YEAR SONG.

---

When the year is new, my dear,

When the year is new,  
Let us make a promise here,  
Little I and you,  
Not to fall a-quarrelling  
Over every tiny thing,  
But sing and smile, smile and sing,  
All the glad year through.

As the year goes by, my dear,  
As the year goes by,  
Let us keep our sky swept clear,  
Little you and I.  
Sweep up every cloudy scowl,  
Every little thunder-growl,  
And live and laugh, laugh and live,  
'Neath a cloudless sky.

When the year is old, my dear,  
When the year is old,  
Let us never doubt or fear,  
Though the days grow cold.  
Loving thoughts are always warm;

*Five Minute Stories*

Merry hearts know ne'er a storm.

Come ice and snow, so love's dear glow

Turn all our gray to gold.

## NEW YEAR.



The little sweet Child tied on her hood, and put on her warm cloak and mittens. "I am going to the wood," she said, "to tell the creatures all about it. They cannot understand about Christmas, mamma says, and of course she knows, but I do think they ought to know about New Year!"

## *Five Minute Stories*

Out in the wood the snow lay light and powdery on the branches, but under foot it made a firm, smooth floor, over which the Child could walk lightly without sinking in. She saw other footprints beside her own, tiny bird-tracks, little hopping marks, which showed where a rabbit had taken his way, traces of mice and squirrels and other little wild-wood beasts.

The Child stood under a great hemlock-tree, and looked up toward the clear blue sky, which shone far away beyond the dark tree-tops. She spread her hands abroad and called, "Happy New Year! Happy New Year to everybody in the wood, and all over the world!"

A rustling was heard in the hemlock branches, and a striped squirrel peeped down at her. "What do you mean by that, little Child?" he asked. And then from all around came other squirrels, came little field-mice, and hares swiftly leaping, and all the winter birds, titmouse and snow-bird, and many another; and they all wanted to know what the Child meant by her greeting, for they had never heard the words before.

"It means that God is giving us another year!" said the Child. "Four more seasons, each lovelier than the last, just as it was last year. Flowers will bud, and then they will blossom, and then the fruit will hang all red and golden on the branches, for birds and men and little children to eat." "And squirrels, too!" cried the chipmunk, eagerly.





“Of course!” said the Child. “Squirrels, too, and every creature that lives in the good green wood. And this is not all! We can do over again the things that we tried to do last year, and perhaps failed in doing. We have another chance to be good and kind, to do little loving things that

## *Five Minute Stories*

help, and to cure ourselves of doing naughty things. Our hearts can have lovely new seasons, like the flowers and trees and all the sweet things that grow and bear leaves and fruit. I thought I would come and tell you all this, because sometimes one does not think of things till one hears them from another's lips. Are you glad I came? If you are glad, say Happy New Year! each in his own way! I say it to you all now in my way. Happy New Year! Happy New Year!"

Such a noise as broke out then had never been heard in the wood since the oldest hemlock was a baby, and that was a long time ago. Chirping, twittering, squeaking, chattering! The wood-doves lit on the Child's shoulder and cooed in her ear, and she knew just what they said. The squirrels made a long speech, and meant every word of it, which is more than people always do; the field-mouse said that she was going to turn over a new leaf, the very biggest cabbage-leaf she could find; while the titmouse invited the whole company to dine with him, a thing he had never done in his life before.

When the Child turned to leave the wood, the joyful chorus followed her, and she went, smiling, home and told her mother all about it. "And, mother," she said, "I should not be surprised if they had got a little bit of Christmas, after all, along with their New Year!"