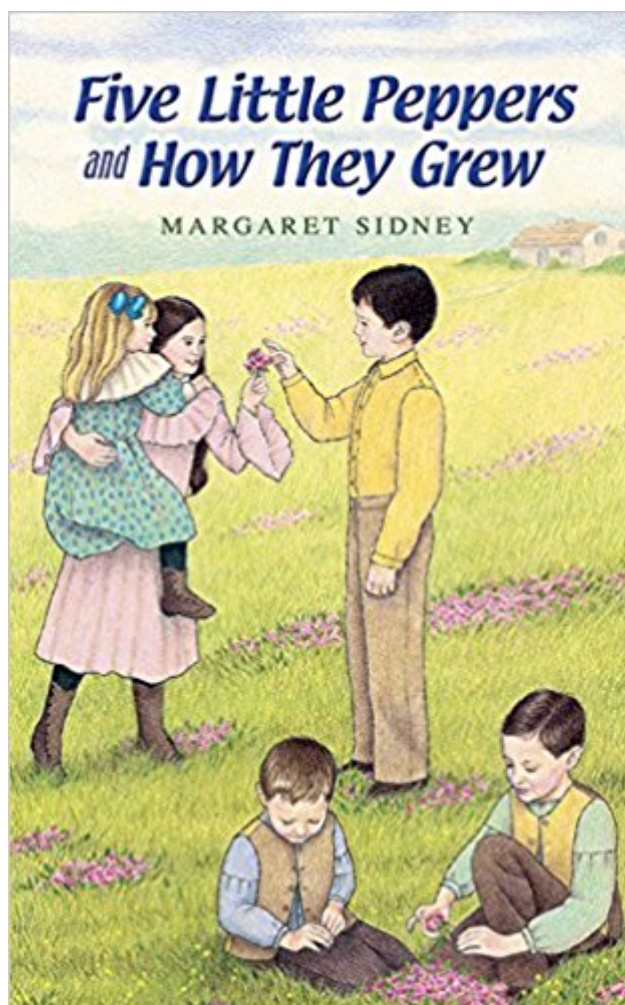


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Five Little Peppers And How They Grew (Dover Children's Classics)



Synopsis

Times are tough around the little brown house! The widowed Mrs. Pepper has to sew all day long just to earn enough to pay the rent and to feed the five growing Peppers. But she faces poverty and trouble with a stout heart, a smiling face, and the help of her jolly brood: blue-eyed Ben, the eldest and the man of the house at the age of 11; pretty Polly, so eager to cook for the family and make everyone happy and comfortable; and the three littlest Peppers, Joel, Davie, and baby Phronsie. A favorite of children, parents, and teachers for generations, this heartwarming classic first appeared in 1880. Since then, it has inspired countless young imaginations with its tender tales of the ways in which courage and good cheer can overcome adversity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This review is on the copy. I enthusiastically give the story 5 stars, but this copy is deplorable. It looks like it was printed by making a copy of a copy.

This has been one of my favorite stories since grade school. I am now in my 30's but I find myself reading it from time to time when I long for a simpler time. I love how this sweet family stays positive and loves each other through everything life throws at them. It is an amazing book that can be enjoyed by people of all ages.

This is a very great addition to the Five Little Peppers series. It is unlike the other books in that instead of it being about the Peppers themselves, it is about the stories Polly Pepper told. More like a collection of short stories, though still containing the dialogue, occupations, and interruptions of the Peppers, this book is very delightful to read and another jewel of Margaret Sidney's. The formatting is a little funky, so to speak, as the quotes are often wrong or messed up and sometimes the words stop at a random place on the page and only resume on the next page, like the end of a chapter that doesn't come to the bottom of its last page. Also, there were a couple typos, such as "Oh" becoming "Ob", and "down" becoming "clown". Once or twice, there were misplaced commas or stuff like that. Other than that, I definitely recommend this book to everyone!

This is one of our all-time favorite books. I read it aloud to my 5 and 8 year olds and my oldest daughter has read it a second time since. Such a sweet story of a loving family.

I first read this as a child and was very happy to read it again (at the age of 60). A nice book with neighbors helping each other, children gladly helping their parents, and a reward at the end of the book. The author tells a good story, without being moralistic about it. She includes happy times, sad ones, hope and fears for the future. Even though if you read between the lines you can see the theme of the actions of good people finally being rewarded in the end. I especially recommend this for the ages of 8 - 12. It can will them the conditions under which some people still live to this day. And it has the promise of a brighter future for anyone.

I really enjoyed "Five Little Peppers and How They Grew". It was interesting, hilarious in some parts, and altogether, a very good read. I just wish would get a few more of the series available for the Kindle! I am always amused at the simplicity of life for the little Peppers...you know, sometimes it seems like they freak out over the smallest things, but then, when you think about the way life was back then, it makes perfect sense. I love just the very simplicity of the books. I do wish they would make more visits to Badgertown, and the little brown house, though, you know, after they go to live with "Grandpapa King" :) Good book, though. Recommended!

This is Book 3 (in terms of events, not when the author wrote it) in the Five Little Peppers series of nineteenth century children's books. (I've provided a complete list of the Pepper books below.) I was delighted to discover I could instantly download to my Kindle what I presume is the Project Gutenberg free version of this nineteenth century children's classic. The formatting is what I'm

coming to see as typical of these free versions. Though there are few typos, there are frequent missing tabs and/or hard returns to set off paragraphs from each other, which makes readability a bit difficult. This book continues the adventures of the Pepper family of five children and their widowed mother, whom they call "Mamsie," and the millionaire, "old Mr. King," and his son Jasper King. Mrs. Pepper is Mr. King's housekeeper, but the Pepper children all call him Grandpapa, since he has informally adopted the Pepper children. Most especially Phronsie, whom he absolutely adores and endlessly showers with dolls. The events of this book occur immediately after the end of Book 2. In this book, Mrs. Pepper is now married to kind Dr. Fisher of Book 1, who saved Polly's eyes when she got the measles. Mr. King decides to take Dr. and Mrs. Fisher, Polly, Phronsie, Jasper and Reverend and Mrs. Henderson (who were neighbors and friends of the Peppers in Book 1) on a tour of Europe. The story is written in omniscient point of view, as are the other two books, so we get to experience the thoughts of many different characters, but Polly remains the key character in this book as in the others. Once again, everyone who meets her adores Polly for her bright smiles and kind nature--which we are, as always, made to understand that she owes to the influence of her down-to-earth, compassionate, hard-working mother. Though the story reads like an historical novel to modern readers, it was actually a contemporary novel when it was written in 1902. There are horse-drawn carriages instead of cars, gaslight instead of electric lamps, no running water, no refrigeration, no central heating, and the traveling party gets to Europe on a "steamer," presumably an ocean liner run with a steam engine. As the title of the book states, there are five siblings: Polly (Mary) is 14, and midway through the book she turns 15. Ben (Ebenezer) is now presumably 16, or nearly so, because he is a year older than Polly. Ben is one of my favorite characters, and I'm sorry to say that other than at the very beginning of the book, we don't see much of him in this book since he has a job he doesn't want to leave to go to Europe. Joel is now presumably 12 or 13, because he is two years younger than Polly. He, too, is not onstage except at the beginning of this book because he is left behind to go to boarding school. Davie (David) is now presumably 10 or 11 years old, because he is two years younger than Joel. He, too, is left behind to go to school. Phronsie (Sophronia) was four at the time of Book 1, but is listed as being only eight in this book as she was in Book 2, even though Book 2 says five years have passed since Book 1. She continues in the roll of the adored baby of the family. She is so beautiful, strangers stop on the street to stare at her, but she continues to have an angelic disposition to go with her celestial beauty. Jappy (Jasper) King is now 17, since he is two years older than Polly, and he is not in school nor, unlike Ben, going to any kind of job. In this book Mrs. King's source of wealth still isn't mentioned, but it is clear by his actions and lofty attitude that he comes from "old money." (It is not until Book 4, *Five Little Peppers*

Grown Up, that we learn for a fact that Mr. King has never worked a day in his life and believes, much like European aristocrats and nobility of that era, that soiling his hands with "trade" would be beneath him.) A lot of this story reads like a fascinating travelogue of what it was like to take the Grand Tour of Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. However, there are plenty of fun adventures caused by the Pepper girls' taking under their wing many troubled fellow travelers. These include a sick old man who turns out to be an earl who is on their ocean liner incognito; the earl's incorrigible, teenage grandson; an artistic orphan girl age fourteen, and an impoverished father of starving children who mugs Mr. King and Phronsie in a Parisian park. In this book as in the previous two, Mr. King's age is still never given, and he is constantly referred to by the author as "old Mr. King," but he's mighty spry. He loves having Phronsie sit on his lap (indeed, in the later books, she continues to sit on his lap even when she is an adult, which you would think would be very hard on an old man's body to bear that kind of weight).

Margaret Sidney was the pseudonym of successful, American children's author, Harriett Mulford Stone Lothrop, who was born in New Haven, Connecticut in 1844 and died in 1924, eight years after writing the last Pepper book. She began her writing career in 1878 at age 34 by publishing stories about Polly and Phronsie Pepper in a Boston children's magazine. She married the magazine's editor, Daniel Lothrop, who began a publishing company and published Harriett's "Five Little Peppers" series, starting in 1881. Here is a list of the 12 Pepper books by date written, which were produced over the course of 35 years:

Five Little Peppers and How They Grew (1881) Five Little Peppers Midway (1890) Five Little Peppers Grown Up (1892) Five Little Peppers: Phronsie Pepper (1897) Five Little Peppers: The Stories Polly Pepper Told (1899) Five Little Peppers: The Adventures of Joel Pepper (1900) Five Little Peppers Abroad (1902) Five Little Peppers At School (1903) Five Little Peppers and Their Friends (1904) Five Little Peppers: Ben Pepper (1905) Five Little Peppers in the Little Brown House (1907) Five Little Peppers: Our Davie Pepper (1916)

Margaret Sidney originally had no plans to write more Pepper books after the fourth book, "Phronsie Pepper", was published in 1897, which she states in her introduction to that book. However, over time the pleas of avid fans from all over the world caused her to give in and write eight more Pepper books. The events in the last eight books take place before the events of the third book in the original series of four books. If you would like to read the six main Pepper books in chronological order, rather than by publication date, this is the ideal sequence: "Five Little Peppers and How They Grew" "Five Little Peppers Midway" "Five Little Peppers Abroad" "Five Little Peppers and Their Friends" "Five Little Peppers Grown Up" "Five Little Peppers: Phronsie Pepper" If you read all the Pepper books, you will discover that the author did not take great care as to continuity in the later books, perhaps because so many years passed between

writing these books. The Pepper books are products of a much slower-paced era, and it is relaxing to experience that approach to children's fiction while being warmly enfolded into the loving Pepper family. This book, and all the Pepper books, are strictly G-rated, and the values they show (not tell through preaching) are very useful ones for any child to be exposed to, including civility, kindness, gratitude, consideration, keeping commitments, accepting difficult circumstances without complaint and forging through them with good cheer. I highly recommend this book for all ages.

I love the Peppers children but for me the reason I enjoyed the first book was seeing how the children survive in poverty. These are less interesting to me but others may still enjoy.

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