

Hitty and the Crows

FROM RACHEL FIELD'S

Hitty: Her First Hundred Years



Adapted and Illustrated by Wendi Dunn

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Photo of Hitty with Flat Hitty courtesy of the Stockbridge Library.

If you want to learn more about Hitty and her adventures, read the book *Hitty: Her First Hundred Years* by Rachel Field, illustrated by Dorothy P. Lathrop, or visit: <https://ataleoftwohittys.com/who-is-hitty>.



Above: The Preble farmhouse and the ancestral pine tree from “Hitty and the Crows.”

Read part one of Hitty’s story, “Hitty’s First Adventure,” here:

<https://ataleoftwohittys.com/hittys-first-adventure>.

Dear Friends,

Have you heard of my Great-Aunt Hitty? She is a tiny wooden doll who lives in the Stockbridge Library in Stockbridge, MA. In 1928, Rachel Field and her friend, Dorothy P. Lathrop, found Hitty in an antique store in New York City. They began to daydream about all the adventures she must have had. Rachel wrote her story which Dorothy illustrated. The result was the book *Hitty: Her First Hundred Years*, and it won the Newbery Award for children's literature in 1930.



Great-Aunt Hitty doesn't travel anymore. She is nearly 200 years old and seems quite content to sit on her gray bench in the library. Whenever I visit, I love hearing about her adventures. I know her story by heart: how the Old Peddler carved Hitty from a piece of mountain ash wood for seven-year-old Phoebe Preble. You can read about that in my first storybook, "Hitty's First Adventure."

The original Hitty book had mostly black and white illustrations. Great-Aunt Hitty explained how she patiently posed as Dorothy drew each one. I thought it would be fun to create new color illustrations, so I asked Great-Aunt Hitty if she would be willing to pose again. She smiled and said, "My joints are too old and fragile now, but that sounds like the perfect project for you."



I am happy to be a stand-in for Great-Aunt Hitty to help illustrate her story. I hope you enjoy "Hitty and the Crows!"

Love,

Flat Hitty

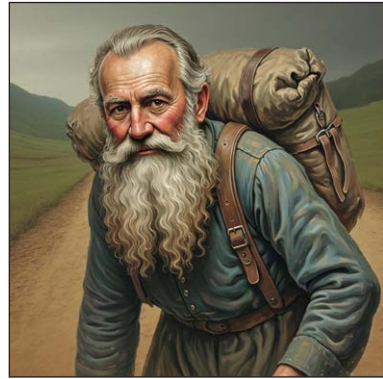
The Preble Family



Hitty Preble
Hand-carved wooden doll



Phoebe Preble
Seven-year-old owner of Hitty



The Old Peddler
Traveler who carved Hitty



Mrs. Kate Preble
Phoebe's mother



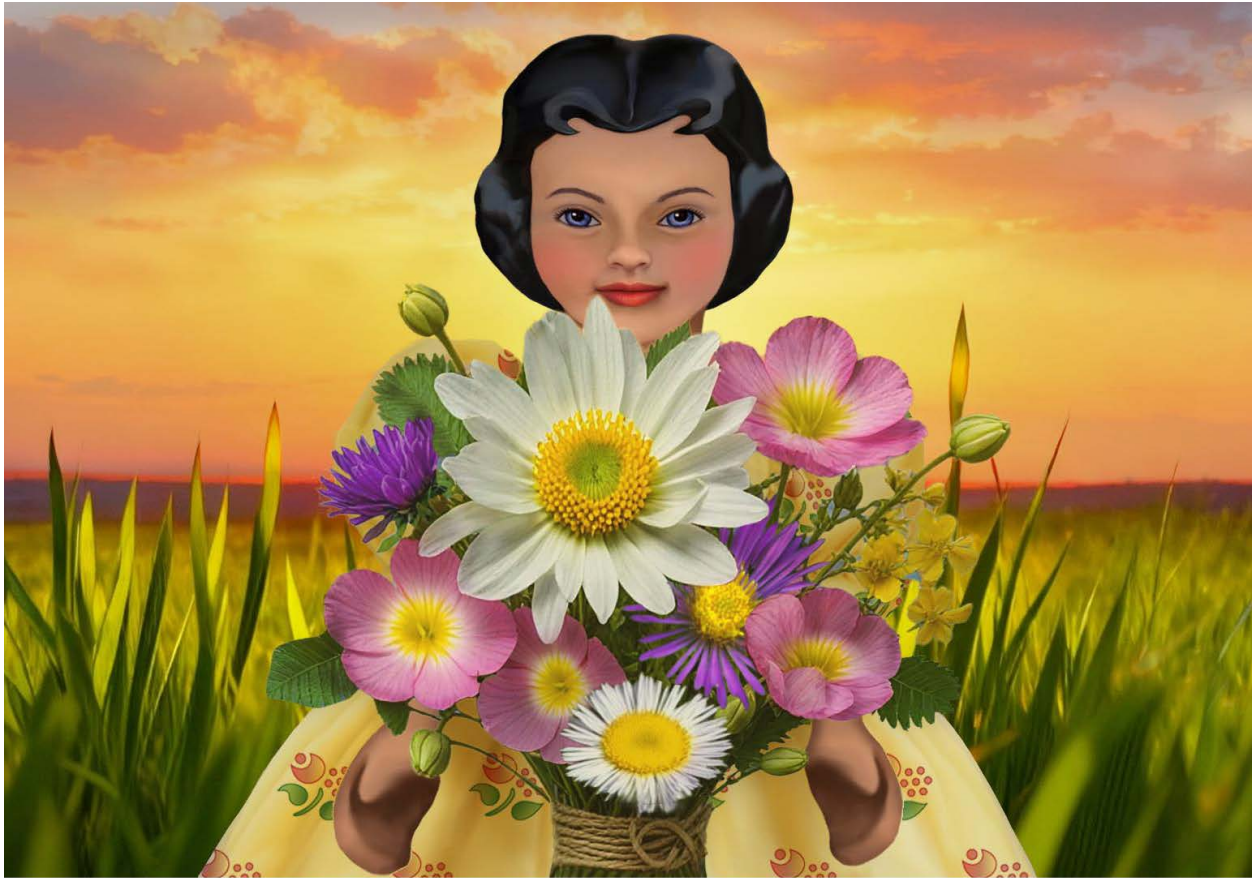
Captain Daniel Preble
Phoebe's father



Andy
Family helper/cabin boy

The book *Hitty: Her First Hundred Years* tells the fictional story of a hand-carved wooden doll. For the first two years of her life, Hitty lived with the Preble family of Maine. Author Rachel Field wrote the book while staying in her cottage on Sutton Island, near the Cranberry Isles in Maine. Hitty's Preble family is fictional, but Rachel used her knowledge of the area and its history to add realism. Hitty's life story began in the winter of 1828, exactly one hundred years before Rachel and her friend Dorothy Lathrop, who illustrated the book, purchased the real Hitty doll in an antique shop. Read on to enjoy this timeless children's story in a new, simplified format.

More about the Preble family: <https://ataleoftwohittys.com/the-preble-family>



My first summer in Maine was glorious. All the wildflowers seemed to be blooming at once. Phoebe took me to pick buttercups, daisies and devil’s paintbrush in the fields. In July, the wild roses opened their petals. Then in August we gathered delicate Queen Anne’s lace and goldenrod.

Now it was raspberry season. Mrs. Preble sent Phoebe and Andy to pick some of the fruit to make raspberry jam. I came along with them in Phoebe’s basket. When we got to the usual spot, the berries had already been picked.

“There’s a place way down by the shore near the Back Cove that has lots of raspberry bushes,” Andy said.

Phoebe frowned. “But that’s where the Indians live. Mother said we’re not allowed to go on Passamaquoddy land.”

“Well, your mother sent us to get raspberries, and there aren’t any more here. If they see us, we can run before they even get close.”

Phoebe agreed, and the two started walking. The Back Cove was a long way from home. We followed a path through a thick forest of pine trees.

Then we turned towards the shore and walked along stones near the water's edge. Finally, we reached the raspberry patch.

Phoebe took me out of the basket and placed me between the roots of a spruce tree, where I could watch them work. Andy and Phoebe started picking berries. Some of the raspberry bushes were very tall, and I could only see the tops of their heads bobbing up and down as they moved along.



It felt very peaceful there. The spruce woods sloped down to the bright blue, shining water. I could hear the birds singing and the gentle hum of bees. The pebbles on the beach made a rumbling noise as each wave hit the shore. No other doll in the world felt as happy as I did then.

Suddenly, I heard Phoebe cry out, “Indians, Andy!” She pointed towards the woods behind me.

Phoebe and Andy stared, eyes wide with fear. Andy grabbed Phoebe’s hand, and they fled. Pebbles slipped and rattled under their feet as they dashed along the beach. Plump red raspberries fell out of their baskets with every step. Then they disappeared among the trees.

At first, I could not believe that they had forgotten me. But there was no doubt about it. It felt awful to wait all alone, wondering what would happen when the Indians reached me.

I could hear people talking nearby, but their words were unfamiliar. A group of women dressed in colorful clothing walked past me into the



raspberry patch. They all wore beaded necklaces and carried woven baskets. One of them had a papoose in a cradleboard on her back. The tiny baby looked right at me with big black eyes and smiled. Then they started filling their baskets with raspberries.

None of the women noticed me. They talked softly to each other as they worked. I wondered why Phoebe and Andy had been so afraid of them. It was almost sunset when they took off through the trees with their full baskets. Once again, I was alone.

“Now, Andy and Phoebe will come back for me,” I thought. But I began to worry as the sun dropped lower and lower. I watched the seagulls flying off toward Cow Island. I could see their black outlines against the sunset as they flew. It would have seemed very beautiful to me if I had not been alone.

Then a loud sound broke the silence.

“Caw, caw, caw!”

Suddenly, the world went black. A large crow landed in front of me and started pecking at my face. It was lucky that I was made of sturdy mountain ash wood. Her beak felt sharp, but I was not damaged.

She finally gave up trying to eat me. Then she saw the shiny button on the back of my dress and grabbed me by my waistband. She took off and started flying.

The crow rose high in the air and carried me a long way to her nest in a large pine tree. The nest held three hungry baby crows who poked me and shoved me around. I felt smothered when the mother crow sat on top of me. I have never been in a more uncomfortable position.

Over the next few days, I moved closer and closer to the edge of the nest. When I dared to look down, I was surprised to discover that the crow had carried me to the ancestral pine near the Preble farmhouse.

Right then, I made up my mind to jump from the nest. I tumbled out and fell a long way, but I got stuck in one of the outer branches. Now I was dangling upside down in midair.

“Will I have to hang here until my clothes fall apart?” I wondered. “What if they don’t find me until Phoebe is too old for dolls?”

Several more days passed. Andy was aiming his slingshot at the crows, when he finally noticed my yellow dress among the branches.



“Phoebe!” he yelled. “Come and see what’s growing on the old pine.” The whole family gathered around the enormous tree. Sadly, I was too high up for them to reach.

Andy tried throwing green apples to knock me down. When that didn’t work, Captain Preble made a long pole from a birch branch. He lashed a doughnut fork to one end, then tried to hook my skirt. To my joy, I felt myself lifted free of the pine branch.

“More than one way to harpoon your whale!” he laughed as he put me in Phoebe’s hands, “and more than one use for a doughnut fork!”

“I bet those pesky crows fetched her over here from the Back Cove,” Andy told Phoebe.

Phoebe was too happy to have me back to worry about how I got there. As for me, my only wish was to stay in Phoebe’s arms forever.



Meet the Designer

Wendi Dunn is the creator of the Flat Hitty paper doll and the blog *A Tale of Two Hittys*. She is a retired graphic designer who enjoys sharing her love of dolls with the world. For more Hitty fun, see the links below:

A Tale of Two Hittys Website/Blog

<https://ataleoftwohittys.com>

Flat Hitty on Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/flat_hitty

Teachers Pay Teachers Store

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/store/a-tale-of-two-hittys>

