Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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1979 JUN | 4 |

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES **INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

I	NVENTORY	NOMINATION	FORM D	ATE ENTERED JUN	1 4 1979
-	SEE II	NSTRUCTIONS IN HOW T TYPE ALL ENTRIES		ONAL REGISTER FORMS ABLE SECTIONS	3
1	NAME		30 52		
	HISTORIC Laur	ra Richards House			
	AND/OR COMMON		_ +	<del>- (                                   </del>	<del>, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , </del>
}	LOCATION				
	STREET & NUMBER	3 Dennis Street		NOT FOR PUBLICATION	Na
	city, town Gar	diner		CONGRESSIONAL DISTR	ICT
	STATE		CODE 23	COUNTY Kennebec	CODE 011
i	Main			Keimebec	011
-	CLASSIFICA	ATION			
	CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRES	ENTUSE
	DISTRICT	PUBLIC	X_OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
	<u>-x</u> BUILDING(S)	PRIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
	STRUCTURE	ВОТН	WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	XX_PRIVATE RESIDENC
	SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
	OBJECT	IN PROCESS	YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	.0.01010101 . 02	BEING CONSIDERED	XXYES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATION
			NO	MILITARY	OTHER:
	OWNER OF	PROPERTY	್ ಕಾಲ ಹಾಗಿತಿ ಪ್ರಕರ್ತಿತ್ರ ೧೮	Lower Streets School	
	NAME Laura E	lizabeth Richards Wig	ggins	12 mag 17 mag 3 mag 3	V
	STREET & NUMBER	3 Dennis Street	$x_{ij} \geq \Sigma^{ij}$	2 . ⊂(ಲೇಕೆ ಸೂಚಾರಣ್	
	CITY, TOWN Ga	rdiner		STATE Ma	ine, 04345
			VICINITY OF	ша	
İ	LOCATION	OF LEGAL DESCR	RIPTION		
	COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS,E	TC. Kennebec County	Registry of Deed	ls,	
	STREET & NUMBER	95 State Stree	et .		
	CITY, TOWN	Augusta		STATE Maine	
6	REPRESEN'	TATION IN EXIST	ING SURVEYS	3	
	TITLE	_			
	DATE		EEDEDAI	STATE COUNTY LOCAL	
	DEPOSITORY FOR	·	FEDERAL	STATECOUNTYLOCAL	
	DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS				
	CITY, TOWN			STATE	

#### CONDITION

**CHECK ONE** 

**CHECK ONE** 

XX\_EXCELLENT

\_\_DETERIORATED

\_\_UNALTERED XX\_ALTERED

XX\_ORIGINAL SITE

\_\_GOOD

\_\_RUINS

\_\_MOVED DATE\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Laura E. Richards House in Gardiner, Maine is a very fine Federal style residence, dating from c. 1810.

The house, which faces east, is of frame construction with  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stories, hipped roof, clapboard siding, denticulated cornice, and two internal end chimneys. The central facade entrance reflects the center-hall plan of the building.

The entrance features a pilastered and entablatured doorway with delicate fan-light and sidelights. The door has eight recessed panels. The five-bay facade's fenestration, as elsewhere, is 12/12. A shed-roofed central dormer in the facade half-story contains 2 sin gle-sash windows, each with four panels.

Attached to the rear (west side) of the house is a  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -story ell, similar in design to the house. Two chimneys are present, along with a hooded entrance facing south. A one-story purch, supported by Doric columns, is attached to the north side of the ell. The ell's most conspicuous feature, however, is the half-story which is inset from the walls of the ell and amount to a very large monitor.

A frame carriage-house is attached to the west end of the ell. This, too, is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stories high, and it features a lunette window in the half-story facing east.

#### PERIOD

#### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	X_LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1600-1699	ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
X_1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION
1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)
		INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

c. 1810

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This substantial Federal house, the finest of its style in Gardiner, derives its principal significance as the home of Laura E. Richards, author and poet, primarily known for her books for children.

Born in Boston in 1850, she was the third daughter and fourth of six children of parents distinguished for their fervent humanitarianism and leadership in public causes. Her father was Samuel Gridley Howe, champion of the Greek War for Independence and founder and lifelong director of the Perkins Institution for the Blind and of the Massachusetts School for the Feeble Minded. Her mother was Julia Ward Howe, author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Mrs. Richards referred to her childhood as "cradeled ... in poetry, romance and philanthropy."

Married to Henry Richards, Harvard graduate and architect, in 1871. Laura enjoyed seventy-one years of married life, during which time the couple became parents of seven children.

Richard's architectumal career was brought to a halt by the financial depression in 1876 and that year the family moved to Gardiner, Maine, founded by his great-great grandfater, Dr. Sylvester Gardiner. His grandfather was Robert Hallowell Gardiner, builder of the great Tudor mansion, "Oaklands," in 1836 (N.R. 7/27/73). While her husband helped run the family paper mill, Laura, busy raising children, began her wirting career. The family in 1878 purchased and moved into the Yellow House, as they called it. This house had been built by Ebenezer Byram about 1810 on land purchased from Robert Hallowell Gardiner. It was to be the Richards' home for sixty-five years.

Mrs. Richards first literary efforts, poetic jingles for children, had appeared in St. Nicholas Magazine in 1873 and her first volume, Five Mice in a Mouse-Trap, a collection of short stories, was published in 1881. In 1885 and 1887 appeared the two perennially endearing "Toto" books. Happy and funloving by nature, she found delight in writing nursery and nonsense rhymes which were published as In My Nursery (1890), The Hurdy-Gurdy (1902), The Piccolo Player (1906), and Tirra Lirra (1932).

As her children grew older she turned to writing books for young girls which made her literary reputation. The most famous of these was <u>Captain January</u> (1890) which sold 300,000 copies and was twice filmed, once as a vehicle for Shirley Temple. The writings she considered her best work were two volumes of charming and poignant fables, <u>The Golden Windows</u> (1903) and The Silver Crown (1906).

### 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Richards, Laura E. <u>Stepping Westward</u> (autobiography). New York, 1935. Richards, Henry. <u>Ninety Years On</u>. Augusta, 1940.

GEOGRAP	HICAL DAT	A			
	MINATED PROPERTY				
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VERBAL BOUN	DARY DESCRIPTION	N			
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STATE		CODE	COUNTY		CODE
		CODE	COUNTY	·	CODE
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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

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Actually, her most substantial literary works were inspired by veneration for her parents. In 1906-9 she published a two volume edition of <u>Letters and Journals of Samuel Gridley Howe</u>, and in collaboration with her sister Maud Howe Elliott whe wrote <u>Julia Ward Howe</u> (1915), awarded the first Pulitzer Prize for biography.

As late as 1940 she published a fine poem celebrating the heroism of the British at Dunkirk and continued to write almost until her death in 1943 at the age of ninety-three.

Form No. 10-300a (Hev. 10-74)

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

LAURA RICHARDS HOUSE

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**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

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As an architect, Henry Richards took great interest in the Yellow House and devoted considerable time and effort to restoring its Federal features which had suffered some loss prior to his ownership. It is impossible to ascertain exactly the extent of his work although it is known that the half story inset addition atop the ell was designed by him. The house has been unchanged since his occupancy ended.