"小屋"丛书

BY THE SHORES OF SILVER LAKE

在银湖畔

[美]劳拉·英格尔·维尔德著

(英语注释读物)

"小屋"丛书

BY THE SHORES OF SILVER LAKE

在银湖畔

（英语注释读物）

[美] 劳拉·英格尔·维尔德 著

刘葆宏　万培德　主编

杨性义　注释

上海教育出版社出版发行

（上海永福路 123 号）

各地新华书店经销　　江苏启东印刷厂印刷

开本 787×1092　1/32　印张 13.25　插页 2　字数 290,000

1987 年 10 月第 1 版　1987 年 10 月第 1 次印刷

印数 1—4,400 本

统一书号：7150·3464　　定价：2.85 元

前　言

“小屋”丛书是美国著名的儿童文学作品，是描述十九世纪中叶美国拓荒者一家的生活的长篇家世小说。全套共八册，每册都有独立完整的内容。这八册书是：

1. LITTLE HOUSE IN THE WOODS 大森林里的小屋，
2. LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE 大草原上的小屋，
3. FARMER BOY 农家子，
4. ON THE BANKS OF PLUM CREEK 在李子河的岸上，
5. BY THE SHORES OF SILVER LAKE 在银湖岸畔，
6. THE LONG WINTER 漫长的冬天，
7. LITTLE TOWN ON THE PRAIRIE 大草原上的小镇，
8. THESE HAPPY GOLDEN YEARS 欢快的黄金年代。

“小屋”丛书初版以来，已经再版几十次，拥有许多读者，并且根据此丛书已制成了优秀的电视系列片广泛放映。此外，还引起许多人对它的内容和主人公进行专门研究。

本书作者就是书中的主人公劳拉·英格尔·维尔德夫人。她是美国著名的儿童文学作家。1867年劳拉生于威斯康星州一个拓荒者的家庭里。她从小跟随父母亲坐着大篷马车先

后在美国中西部明尼苏达、堪萨斯、达科他等州的未开发地区进行拓荒。她在致读者的信中自述她是“经历了书中发生的每一件事。”自从1894年她的一家定居在密苏里后，她陆续回忆写出了“小屋”丛书及其他回忆过去年代的生活的书籍，深受美国读者的欢迎。

劳拉在密苏里的旧居现今已成为“劳拉·英格尔·维尔德故居和博物馆”，对外开放。馆内至今保持着同她生前完全一样的布置，并陈列着书中提及的许多物品。劳拉的家庭当时在达科他州德斯梅的土地、界石、供观察测量用的棚屋、劳拉读书的学校等也都辟作游览地点，供人参观，深受人们的欢迎。

维尔德夫人的这套小说是现实主义自传体小说，基本如实地描写了美国历史上的一个特定阶段的某个侧面。维尔德夫人卒于1957年，享年九十。但本丛书所写仅限于她的前半生，即十九世纪后半期的拓荒情景。

英国人在北美移民定居起于十七世纪初，早期移民受英皇统治，北美还是英国的殖民地。但是，他们于1776年宣布独立，成立了美利坚合众国。到了十九世纪初，美国北方出现了资本主义的工业革命，但是南方还是蓄奴制的农业社会。南北矛盾不断加剧，最终导致了1861—1865年的南北战争。这场内战以北方胜利告终。从此，资本主义生产方式不但在北方占优势，而且向南方和中西部迅速扩展。在这以前，经济、政治、文化都集中在东部沿海，但是，此后中西部在全国所起的作用却越来越大了。小说描写的就是在南北战争以后向中西部移民拓荒的生活。读者可以从中看到早期拓荒者以一家一户为单位开荒种地、伐木建屋的情景，也能看到后来的城镇在大草原上兴起以及农业开始实现机械化的景象。

这套丛书还带有强烈的理想主义色彩。它以深厚的感情

歌颂了普通美国人的勤劳、勇敢、诚实和乐观主义的品质，歌颂了亲人之间的爱和邻居、朋友、甚至陌生人之间的互助精神。理想与现实有时难免有距离，但它却有鼓舞人们前进和启示人们探索、追求美好生活的积极作用。因此，这套丛书长期以来受到人们的特别爱好。

本书内容生动活泼，文字朴实流畅。作者在描述生活方式、劳动过程时，十分具体精确；在抒情写景时，却又细腻深刻。读者可以从中学到广泛涉及生活各方面的用语和地道的表达方式，以提高自己的英语水平。同时，又可以从这套书中学到一些美国的历史和地理知识，了解到美国人民在早期开荒移民时期与自然界的暴风雨、蝗虫、野兽等作斗争的情形；了解到他们砍伐森林、开垦土地、种植作物、畜养牛羊、建造自己家园的艰苦劳动；以及拓荒者日常家庭生活、文娱活动、节日团聚的欢乐情景。书中确如作者所说“既有阳光，又有阴影。”读者还能从中体会到美国劳动人民不畏艰难、勇敢创业的精神，他们诚实、耐劳、勤奋，俭朴而又充满欢乐的乐观精神。

这套丛书适合高中或大学低年级学生作为课外泛读材料，对于英语爱好者当然同样适用。为了便于读者独立阅读，我们对原文进行了比较详细的注释，书后并附有词汇表。本丛书图文并茂，插图如实地反映了当时的真实情景。参加注释工作的有：陈黛云同志及上海外国语学院附属上海外国语学校的叶永、翁鹤年、张慧芬、杨性义、荣新民、姚颖白、忻韦廉等老师。我们还请华东师大外语系俞苏美副教授对全书进行了仔细的审校。

上海外国语学院附属上海外国语学校校长　刘葆宏

华东师范大学外语系副教授　万培德

1984年3月

CONTENTS

1. UNEXPECTED VISITOR[1]

LAURA[2] WAS washing the dishes one morning when old Jack[3], lying in the sunshine on the doorstep, growled to tell her that someone was coming. She looked out, and saw a buggy crossing the gravelly ford of Plum Creek[4].

"Ma," she said,"it's a strange woman coming."

Ma sighed. She was ashamed of the untidy house, and so was Laura. But Ma was too weak and Laura was too tired and they were too sad to care very much[5].

Mary and Carrie and baby Grace and Ma had all had scarlet fever[6]. The Nelsons across the creek had had it too, so there had been no one to help Pa and Laura. The doctor had come every day; Pa did not know how he could pay the bill[7]. Far worst of all, the fever had settled in Mary's eyes[8], and Mary was blind.

She was able to sit up now, wrapped in quilts in Ma's old hickory rocking chair[9]. All that long time, week after week, when she could still see a little, but less every day, she had never cried. Now she could not see even the brightest light any more. She was still patient and brave.

Her beautiful golden hair was gone. Pa had shaved it close[10] because of the fever, and her poor shorn head[11] looked like a boy's. Her blue eyes were still beautiful, but they did not know what was before them, and Mary herself could never look through them again to tell Laura what she was thinking without saying a word.

"Who can it be at this hour in the morning?" Mary wondered, turning her ear toward the sound of the buggy.

"It's a strange woman alone in a buggy. She's wearing a brown sunbonnet and driving a bay horse," Laura answered. Pa had said that she must be eyes for Mary[12].

"Can you think of anything for dinner?" Ma asked. She meant for a company dinner[13], if the woman stayed till dinnertime.

There was bread and molasses, and potatoes. That was all. This was springtime, too early for garden vegetables; the cow was dry and the hens had not yet begun to lay their snmmer's eggs. Only a few small fish were left in Plum Creek. Even the little cottontail rabbits had been hunted until they were scarce.

Pa did not like a country so old and worn out that the hunting was poor. He wanted to go west. For two years he had wanted to go west and take a homestead, but Ma did not want to leave the settled country. And there was no money. Pa had made only two poor wheat

crops since the grasshoppers came; he had barely been able to keep out of debt[14], and now there was the doctor's bill[15].

Laura answered Ma stoutly, "What's good enough for us is good enough for anybody[16]!"

The buggy stopped and the strange woman sat in it, looking at Laura and Ma in the doorway. She was a pretty woman, in her neat brown print dress[17] and sunbonnet. Laura felt ashamed of her own bare feet and limp dress[18] and uncombed braids[19]. Then Ma said slowly, "Why, Docia[20]!"

"I wondered if you'd know me," the woman said. "A good deal of water's gone under the bridge since you folks left Wisconsin[21]."

She was the pretty Aunt Docia who had worn the dress with buttons that looked like blackberries, long ago at the sugaring-off dance[22] at Grandpa's house in the Big Woods of Wisconsin.

She was married now. She had married a widower with two children. Her husband was a contractor, working on the new railroad in the west. Aunt Docia was driving alone in the buggy, all the way from Wisconsin to the railroad camps in Dakota Territory[23].

She had come by to see if Pa would go with her. Her husband, Uncle Hi, wanted a good man to be storekeeper, bookkeeper and timekeeper, and Pa could have the job.

"It pays fifty dollars a month, Charles," she said.

A kind of tightness smoothed out of Pa's thin cheeks and his blue eyes lighted up[24]. He said slowly, "Seems like I can draw good pay[25] while I'm looking for that homestead, Caroline."

Ma still did not want to go west. She looked around the kitchen, at Carrie and at Laura standing there with Grace in her arms.

"Charles, I don't know," she said. "It does seem providential, fifty dollars a month. But we're settled here. We've got the farm."

"Listen to reason[26], Caroline," Pa pleaded."We can get a hundred and sixty acres out west, just by living on it, and the land's as good as this is, or better. If Uncle Sam's[27] willing to give us a farm in place of the one he drove us off of[28], in Indian Territory, I say let's take it. The hunting's good in the west, a man can get all the meat he wants."

Laura wanted so much to go that she could hardly keep from speaking[29].

"How could we go now?" Ma asked. "With Mary not strong enough to travel."

"That's so," said Pa. "That's a fact."Then he asked Aunt Docia, "The job wouldn't wait[30]?"

"No," Aunt Docia said. "No, Charles. Hi is in need of[31] a man, right now. You have to take it or leave it[32]."

"It's fifty dollars a month, Caroline," said Pa. "And a homestead."

It seemed a long time before Ma said gently, "Well, Charles, you must do as you think best."

"I'll take it, Docia!" Pa got up and clapped on his hat. "Where there's a will, there's a way[33]. I'll go see Nelson[34]."

Laura was so excited that she could hardly do the housework properly. Aunt Docia helped, and while they worked she told the news from Wisconsin.

Her sister, Aunt Ruby, was married and had two boys and a beautiful little baby girl named Dolly Varden. Uncle George was a lumberjack, logging on the Mississippi[35]. Uncle Henry's folks were all well, and Charley was turning out better than had been expected, considering how Uncle Henry had spared the rod and spoiled that child[36]. Grandpa and Grandma were still living in the old place, their big log house. They could afford a frame house[37] now, but Grandpa declared that good sound oak logs made better walls than thin sawed boards[38].

Even Black Susan[39], the cat that Laura and Mary had left behind when they rode away from their little log house in the woods, was still living there. The little log house had changed hands several times[40], and now it was a corncrib, but nothing would persuade that cat to live anywhere else. She went right on living in the

cornerib, sleek and plump from rats she caught[41], and there was hardly a family in all that country that didn't have one of her kittens. They were all good mousers, big-eared and longtailed like Black Susan.

Dinner was ready in the swept, neat house when Pa came back. He had sold the farm. Nelson was paying two hundred dollars cash for it, and Pa was jubilant. "That'll square up all we owe, and leave a little something over[42]," he said. "How's that, Caroline!"

"I hope it's for the best, Charles," Ma replied."But how——"

"Wait till I tell you! I've got it all figured out[43]," Pa told her."I'll go on with Docia tomorrow morning. You and the girls stay here till Mary gets well and strong, say[44] a couple of months. Nelson's agreed to haul our stuff to the depot[45], and you'll all come out on the train."

Laura stared at him. So did Carrie and Ma. Mary said, "On the train?"

They had never thought of traveling on the train. Laura knew, of course, that people did travel on trains[46]. The trains were often wrecked[47] and the people killed. She was not exactly afraid, but she was excited. Carrie's eyes were big and scared in her peaked little face[48].

They had seen the train rushing across the prairie, with long, rolling puffs of black smoke[49] streaming back from the engine. They heard its roar and its wild, clear

whistle. Horses ran away, if their driver could not hold them when they saw a train coming.

Ma said in her quiet way, "I am sure we will manage nicely with Laura and Carrie to help me."

2. GROWN UP

THERF WAS a great deal of work to be done, for Pa must leave early next morning. He set the old wagon bows[1] on the wagon and pulled the canvas cover[2] over them; it was almost worn out but it would do for the short trip[3]. Aunt Docia and Carrie helped him pack the wagon, while Laura washed and ironed, and baked hard-tack for the journey.

In the midst of it all, Jack stood looking on. Everyone was too busy to notice the old bulldog, till suddenly Laura saw him standing between the house and the wagon. He did not frisk about, cocking his head and

laughing, as he used to do. He stood braced on his stiff legs because he was troubled with rheumatism now[4]. His forehead was wrinkled sadly and his stub-tail[5] was limp.

"Good old Jack," Laura told him, but he did not wag. He ooked at her sorrowfully.

"Look, Pa. Look at Jack," Laura said. She bent and stroked his smooth head. The fine hairs were gray now. First his nose had been gray and then his jaws, and now even his ears were no longer brown. He leaned his head against her and sighed.

All in one instant[6], she knew that the old dog was too tired to walk all the way to Dakota Territory under the wagon. He was troubled because he saw the wagon ready to go traveling again, and he was so old and tired.

"Pa!" she cried out. "Jack can't walk so far! Oh, Pa, we can't leave Jack!"

"He wouldn't hold out to walk it for a fact[7]," Pa said. "I'd forgot, I'll move the feedsack and make a place for him to ride here in the wagon[8]. How'll you like to go riding in the wagon, huh, old fellow?"

Jack wagged one polite wag and turned his head aside. He did not want to go, even in the wagon.

Laura knelt down and hugged him as she used to do when she was a little girl. "Jack! Jack! We're going west! Don't you want to go west again, Jack?"

Always before he had been eager and joyful when