

欢快的黄金年代

THESE HAPPY GOLDEN YEARS

英语注释读物

Golden years are passing by,
Happy, happy golden years,
Passing on the wings of time,
These happy golden years,
Call them back as they go by,
Sweet their memories are,
Oh, improve them as they fly,
These happy golden years.

“小屋”丛书



上海教育出版社

(英语注释读物)

THESE HAPPY GOLDEN YEARS

欢快的黄金年代

“小屋”丛书

[美] 劳拉·英格尔·维尔德 著

刘葆宏 万培德 主编

忻韦廉 注释

上海教育出版社

(沪)新登字107号

“小屋”丛书

THESE HAPPY GOLDEN YEARS

欢快的黄金年代

(英语注释读物)

【美】劳拉·英格尔·维尔德 著

刘葆宏 万培德 主编

忻韦廉 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 海安人民印刷厂印刷

开本 787×1092 1/32 印张 13.5 插页 2 字数 297,000

1991年 12月第 1版 1991年 12月第 1次印刷

印数 1— 1,500 本

ISBN 7-5320-1712-5/G·1667 定价: 4.50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 BIG 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法，以提高自己的英语水平。同时，从这套书中还可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、俭朴而又充满欢快的乐观精神。

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合。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。担任本丛书注释的有：华东师范大学外语系陈黛云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。我们还请华东师范大学外语系俞苏美副教授对全书进行了仔细的审校。

刘葆宏 万培德

1984年1月



CONTENTS

1. LAURA LEAVES HOME	1
2. FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL	11
3. ONE WEEK	21
4. SLEIGH BELLS	31
5. A STIFF UPPER LIP	47
6. MANAGING	55
7. A KNIFE IN THE DARK	62
8. A COLD RIDE	71
9. THE SUPERIN-TENDENT'S VISIT	80
10. ALMANZO SAYS GOOD-BY	84
11. JINGLE BELLS	91
12. EAST OR WEST, HOME IS BEST.....	97
13. SPRINGTIME	104
14. HOLDING DOWN A CLAIM	116
15. MARY COMES HOME	125
16. SUMMER DAYS	132
17. BREAKING THE COLTS.....	142
18. THE PERRY SCHOOL	149
19. THE BROWN POPLIN	159
20. NELLIE OLESON	172

21. BARNUM AND SKIP	188
22. SINGING SCHOOL	204
23. BARNUM WALKS	212
24. ALMANZO GOES AWAY	221
25. THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS	228
26. TEACHERS' EXAMINATIONS	237
27. SCHOOL DAYS END	242
28. THE CREAM-COLORED HAT.....	245
29. SUMMER STORM	258
30. SUNSET ON THE HILL	267
31. WEDDING PLANS	273
32. "HASTE TO THE WEDDING"	280
33. LITTLE GRAY HOME IN THE WEST	287
NOTES	299
Vocabulary	388

1. LAURA LEAVES HOME

SUNDAY afternoon was clear, and the snow-covered prairie¹ sparkled in the sunshine. A little wind blew gently from the south, but it was so cold that the sled runners squeaked as they slid on the hard-packed snow². The horses' hoofs made a dull sound, clop, clop, clop. Pa did not say anything.

Sitting beside him on the board laid across the bobsled³, Laura⁴ did not say anything, either. There was nothing to say. She was on her way to teach school⁵.

Only yesterday she was a schoolgirl; now she was a schoolteacher. This had happened so suddenly. Laura could hardly stop expecting⁶ that tomorrow she would be going to school with little sister Carrie⁷, and sitting in her seat with Ida Brown⁸. But tomorrow she would be teaching school.

She did not really know how to do it. She never had taught school, and she was not sixteen years old yet. Even for fifteen, she was small⁹; and now she felt very small.

The slightly rolling, snowy land lay empty all around¹⁰. The high, thin sky was empty overhead. Laura did not look back, but she knew that the town was miles

behind her now; it was only a small dark blot¹¹ on the empty prairie's whiteness. In the warm sitting room there, Ma and Carrie and Grace¹² were far away.

Brewster settlement¹³ was still miles ahead. It was twelve miles from town. Laura did not know what it was like. She did not know anyone there. She had seen Mr. Brewster only once, when he came to hire her to teach the school. He was thin and brown, like any homesteader; he did not have much to say for himself¹⁴.

Pa sat looking ahead into the distance while he held the reins in his mittened hands¹⁵ and now and then chirruped to the horses. But he knew how Laura felt. At last he turned his face toward her and spoke, as if he were answering her dread of tomorrow¹⁶.

"Well, Laura! You are a schoolteacher now! We knew you would be, didn't we? Though we didn't expect it so soon."

"Do you think I can, Pa?" Laura answered. "Suppose ... just suppose ... the children won't mind me¹⁷ when they see how little I am."

"Of course you can," Pa assured her. "You've never failed yet at anything you tried to do, have you?"

"Well, no," Laura admitted. "But I ... I never tried to teach school."

"You've tackled every job that ever came your way¹⁸," Pa said. "You never shirked, and you always stuck to it till you did what you set out to do¹⁹. Success

gets to be a habit²⁰, like anything else a fellow keeps on doing."

Again there was a silence except for the squeaking of the sled runners and the clop-clop-clop of the horses' feet on the hard snow. Laura felt a little better. It was true; she always had kept on trying; she had always had to²¹. Well, now she had to teach school.

"Remember that time on Plum Creek²², Half-Pint²³?" Pa said. "Your Ma and I went to town, and a blizzard came up? And you got the whole woodpile into the house."

Laura laughed out loud, and Pa's laugh rang like great bells in the cold stillness. How little and scared and funny she had been, that day so long ago!

"That's the way to tackle things!" Pa said. "Have confidence in yourself, and you can lick anything²⁴. You have confidence in yourself, that's the only way to make other folks have confidence in you²⁵." He paused, and then said, "One thing you must guard against."

"What, Pa?" Laura asked.

"You are so quick, flutterbudget²⁶. You are apt to act or speak first, and think afterward²⁷. Now you must do your thinking first and speak afterward. If you will remember to do that, you will not have any trouble."

"I will, Pa," Laura said earnestly.

It was really too cold to talk. Snug enough under the heavy blankets and quilts²⁸, they went on silently to-

ward the south. The cold wind blew against their faces. A faint trace of sled runners stretched onward before them. There was nothing else to see but the endless, low white land and the huge pale sky, and the horses' blue shadows blotting the sparkle from the snow²⁹.

The wind kept Laura's thick black woolen veil rippling before her eyes. Her breath was frozen in a patch of frost in the veil³⁰, that kept slapping cold and damp against her mouth and nose.

At last she saw a house ahead. Very small at first, it grew larger as they came nearer to it. Half a mile away there was another, smaller one, and far beyond it, another. Then still another appeared. Four houses; that was all. They were far apart and small on the white prairie.

Pa pulled up the horses. Mr. Brewster's house looked like two claim shanties³¹ put together to make a peaked roof. Its tar-paper roof³² was bare, and melted snow had run into big icicles that hung from the eaves in blobby columns³³ larger around than Laura's arms. They looked like huge, jagged teeth. Some bit into the snow³⁴, and some were broken off. The broken chunks of ice³⁵ lay frozen into the dirty snow around the door, where dish-water had been thrown. There was no curtain at the window, but smoke blew from the stovepipe that was anchored to the roof with wires.

Mr. Brewster opened the door. A child was squalling

in the house, and he spoke loudly to be heard³⁶. "Come in, Ingalls³⁷. Come in and warm yourself."

"Thank you," Pa replied. "But it's a long twelve miles home and I better be going³⁸."

Laura slid out from under the blankets quickly, not to let the cold in. Pa handed her Ma's satchel, that held her change of underclothes, her other dress, and her schoolbooks.

"Good-by, Pa," she said.

"Good-by, Laura." His blue eyes smiled encouragement to her³⁹. But twelve miles was too far to drive often⁴⁰; she would not see him again for two months.

She went quickly into the house. Coming from the bright sunshine, she could not see anything for a moment. Mr. Brewster said, "This is Mrs. Brewster; and Lib⁴¹, here's the teacher."

A sullen-looking woman⁴² stood by the stove, stirring something in a frying pan. A little boy was hanging onto her skirts and crying. His face was dirty and his nose needed a handkerchief.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Brewster," Laura said as cheerfully as she possibly could⁴³.

"Just go in the other room and take off your wraps." Mrs. Brewster said. "Hang them behind the curtain where the sofa is." She turned her back on Laura⁴⁴ and went on stirring the gravy in the pan.

Laura did not know what to think. She could not

have done anything to offend Mrs. Brewster⁴⁵. She went into the other room.

The partition stood under the peak of the roof, and divided the houses into two equal parts. On either side of the partition, the rafters and the tar-paper roof sloped down to low walls. The board walls were well battened down every crack⁴⁶. They were not finished inside; the bare studding stood against them⁴⁷. This was like Pa's house on the claim, but it was smaller and had no ceiling overhead.

The other room was very cold, of course. It had one window looking out at empty prairie covered with snow. Against the wall under the window was the sofa, a bought-en sofa⁴⁸ with a curved wooden back and one end curved-up. A bed was made up, on the sofa. Brown calico curtains hung against the wall at each end of it, on a string that ran across above the window, so they could be pulled together and hide the sofa. Opposite it, a bed stood against the wall, and at the foot of the bed there was just space enough for a bureau and a trunk.

Laura hung her coat and muffler and veil and hood on nails behind the calico curtain, and set Ma's satchel on the floor under them. She stood shivering in the cold⁴⁹, not wanting to go into the warm room where Mrs. Brewster was. But she had to, so she did⁵⁰.

Mr. Brewster sat by the stove, holding the little boy on his knee. Mrs. Brewster was scraping the gravy into

a bowl. The table was set, with plates and knives carelessly askew on a smudged white cloth⁵¹, the cloth was crooked on the table.

"May I help you, Mrs. Brewster?" Laura said bravely. Mrs. Brewster did not answer. She dumped potatoes angrily into a dish and thumped it on the table⁵². The clock on the wall whirred, getting ready to strike, and Laura saw that the time was five minutes to four.

"Nowadays breakfast is so late, we eat only two meals a day," Mr. Brewster explained.

"Whose fault is it, I'd like to know!" Mrs. Brewster blazed out. "As if I didn't do enough, slaving from morning to night⁵³ in this ..."

Mr. Brewster raised his voice. "I only meant the days are so short ..."

"Then say what you mean⁵⁴!" Mrs. Brewster slammed the high chair to the table⁵⁵, snatched the little boy and sat him in it⁵⁶, hard.

"Dinner's ready," Mr. Brewster said to Laura. She sat down in the vacant place. Mr. Brewster passed her the potatoes and salt pork and gravy. The food was good but Mrs. Brewster's silence was so unpleasant that Laura could hardly swallow.

"Is the schoolhouse far from here?" she tried to ask cheerfully.

Mr. Brewster said, "Half a mile, cross-lots⁵⁷. It's a claim shanty. The fellow that homesteaded that quarter section

couldn't stick it out⁵⁸, he gave up and went back East⁵⁹."

Then he, too, was silent. The little boy fretted, trying to reach everything on the table. Suddenly he flung his tin plate of food on the floor. Mrs. Brewster slapped his hands, and he screamed. He went on screaming and kicking the table leg.

At last the meal was over. Mr. Brewster took the milk pail from its nail on the wall and went to the stable. Mrs. Brewster sat the little boy on the floor and gradually he stopped crying, while Laura helped to clear the table. Then she got an apron from Ma's satchel, tied it over her brown princess dress, and took a towel, to dry the dishes while Mrs. Brewster washed them.

"What's your little boy's name, Mrs. Brewster?" she asked. She hoped that Mrs. Brewster would be more pleasant now.

"John," said Mrs. Brewster.

"That's such a nice name," Laura said. "People can call him Johnny while he's little, and then when he grows up, John is a good name for a man. Do you call him Johnny now?"

Mrs. Brewster did not answer. The silence grew more and more dreadful. Laura felt her face grow burning hot⁶⁰. She went on wiping the dishes blindly. When they were done, Mrs. Brewster threw out the dishwater and hung the pan on its nail. She sat in the rocking chair and rocked idly, while Johnny crawled under the