

“小屋”丛书

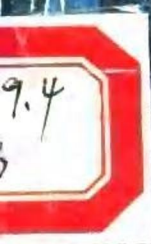
LITTLE HOUSE
IN THE BIG WOODS

大森林里的小屋

(英语注释读物)



上海教育出版社



THE LITTLE HOUSE BOOKS

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(英语注释读物)

〔美〕劳拉·英格尔·维尔德著

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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 李树溪边，
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·威尔德夫人。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蓬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。

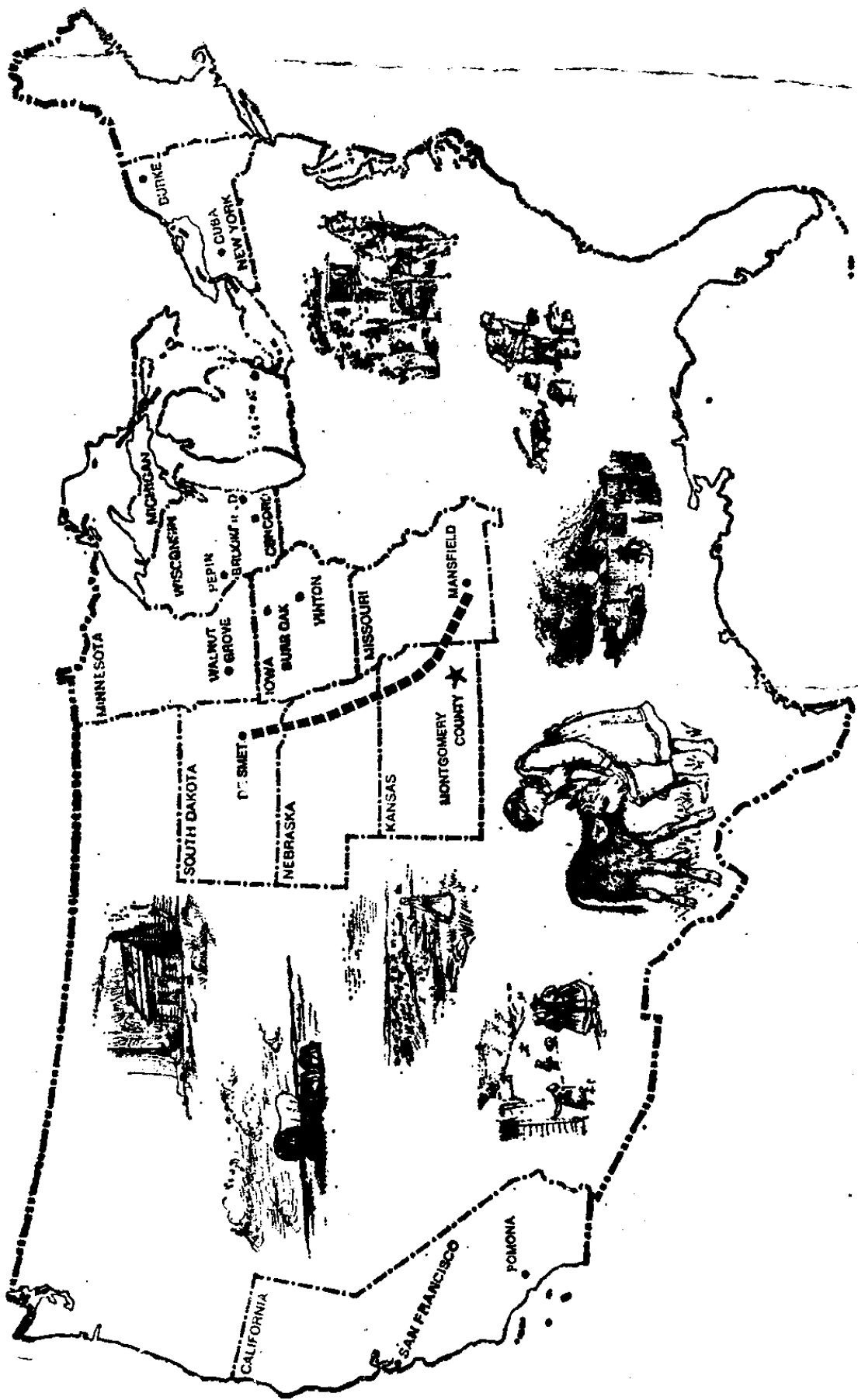
这套丛书还带有强烈的理想主义色彩。它以深厚的感情

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、野兽等作斗争的情况；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，插图如实反映了当时的真实情景。本丛书请上海外国语学院附属上海外国语学校刘葆宏校长和华东师范大学外语系万培德副教授担任主编，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吐永、翁鹤年、张慧芬、杨性义、荣新民、姚颖白、忻韦廉等老师。我们还请华东师范大学外语系俞苏美副教授对全书进行了仔细的审校。

编者





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Chapter 1



Little HOUSE In the Big WOODS

ONCE upon a time, sixty years ago, a little girl lived in the Big Woods of Wisconsin¹, in a little gray house made of logs.²

The great, dark trees of the Big Woods stood all around the house; and beyond them were other trees and beyond them were more trees. As far as a man could go to the north in a day, or a week, or a whole month, there was nothing but woods.³ There were no houses. There were no roads. There were no people. There were only trees and the wild animals who had their homes among them.

Wolves lived in the Big Woods, and bears, and huge

wild cats. Muskrats⁴ and mink⁵ and otter⁶ lived by the streams. Foxes had dens in the hills and deer roamed everywhere.

To the east of the little log house, and to the west, there were miles upon miles⁷ of trees, and only a few little log houses scattered far apart⁸ in the edge of the Big Woods.

So far as the little girl could see,⁹ there was only the one little house where she lived with her Father and Mother, her sister Mary and baby sister Carrie. A wagon track¹⁰ ran before the house, turning and twisting out of sight in the woods where the wild animals lived, but the little girl did not know where it went, nor what might be at the end of it.

The little girl was named Laura¹¹ and she called her father, Pa, and her mother, Ma. In those days and in that place, children did not say Father and Mother, nor Mamma and Papa, as they do now.

At night, when Laura lay awake in the trundle bed,¹² she listened and could not hear anything at all but¹³ the sound of the trees whispering together. Sometimes, far away in the night, a wolf howled. Then he came nearer, and howled again.

It was a scary sound. Laura knew that wolves would eat little girls. But she was safe inside the solid log walls. Her father's gun hung over the door and good old Jack, the brindle bulldog,¹⁴ lay on guard¹⁵ before it.

Her father would say;

"Go to sleep, Laura. Jack won't let the wolves in." So Laura snuggled under the covers of the trundle bed, close beside Mary, and went to sleep.

One night her father picked her up out of bed and carried her to the window so that she might see the wolves. There were two of them sitting in front of the house. They looked like shaggy dogs. They pointed their noses at the big, bright moon, and howled.

Jack paced up and down¹⁶ before the door, growling. The hair stood up along his back and he showed his sharp, fierce teeth to the wolves. They howled, but they could not get in.

The house was a comfortable house. Upstairs there was a large attic, pleasant to play in when the rain drummed on the roof. Downstairs was the small bedroom, and the big room. The bedroom had a window that closed with a wooden shutter. The big room had two windows with glass in the panes, and it had two doors, a front door and a back door.

All around the house was a crooked rail fence,¹⁷ to keep the bears and the deer away.

In the yard in front of the house were two beautiful big oak trees. Every morning as soon as she was awake Laura ran to look out of the window, and one morning she saw in each of the big trees a dead deer hanging from a branch.

Pa had shot the deer the day before and Laura had been asleep when he brought them home at night and hung them high in the trees so the wolves could not get the meat.

That day Pa and Ma and Laura and Mary had fresh venison for dinner. It was so good that Laura wished they could eat it all. But most of the meat must be salted and smoked and packed away¹⁸ to be eaten in the winter.

For winter was coming. The days were shorter, and frost crawled up¹⁹ the window panes at night. Soon the snow would come. Then the log house would be almost buried in snowdrifts, and the lake and the streams would freeze. In the bitter cold weather Pa could not be sure of finding any wild game to shoot for meat.

The bears would be hidden away in their dens where they slept soundly²⁰ all winter long. The squirrels would be curled in their nests in hollow trees,²¹ with their furry tails wrapped snugly around their noses. The deer and the rabbits would be shy and swift. Even if Pa could get a deer, it would be poor and thin, not fat and plump as deer are in the fall.

Pa might hunt alone all day in the bitter cold, in the Big Woods covered with snow, and come home at night with nothing for Ma and Mary and Laura to eat.

So as much food as possible must be stored away²² in the little house before winter came.

Pa skinned the deer carefully and salted and stretched the hides, for he would make soft leather of them. Then he cut up the meat, and sprinkled salt over the pieces as he laid them on a board.

Standing on end²³ in the yard was a tall length cut from the trunk of a big hollow tree. Pa had driven nails inside as far as he could reach from each end. Then he stood it up, put a little roof over the top, and cut a little door on one side near the bottom. On the piece that he cut out he fastened leather hinges; then he fitted it into place,²⁴ and that was the little door, with the bark still on it.

After the deer meat had been salted several days, Pa cut a hole near the end of each piece and put a string through it. Laura watched him do this, and then she watched him hang the meat on the nails in the hollow log.

He reached up through the little door and hung meat on the nails, as far up as he could reach. Then he put a ladder against the log, climbed up to the top, moved the roof to one side, and reached down inside to hang meat on those nails.

Then Pa put the roof back again, climbed down the ladder, and said to Laura:

"Run over to the chopping block²⁵ and fetch me some of those green hickory chips²⁶—new, clean, white ones."

So Laura ran to the block where Pa chopped wood, and filled her apron with the fresh, sweet-smelling chips.

Just inside the little door in the hollow log Pa built a fire of tiny bits of bark and moss, and he laid some of the chips on it very carefully.

Instead of burning quickly, the green chips smoldered and filled the hollow log with thick, choking smoke. Pa shut the door, and a little smoke squeezed through²⁷ the crack around it and a little smoke came out through the roof, but most of it was shut in with the meat.



"There's nothing better than good hickory smoke," Pa said. "That will make good venison that will keep anywhere, in any weather."

Then he took his gun, and slinging his ax on his shoulder²⁸ he went away to the clearing to cut down some more trees.

Laura and Ma watched the fire for several days. When smoke stopped coming through the cracks, Laura would bring more hickory chips and Ma would put them on the fire under the meat. All the time there was a little smell of smoke in the yard, and when the door was opened a thick, smoky, meaty smell came out.

At last Pa said the venison had smoked long enough. Then they let the fire go out,²⁹ and Pa took all the strips and pieces of meat³⁰ out of the hollow tree. Ma wrapped



each piece neatly in paper and hung them in the attic where they would keep safe and dry.

One morning Pa went away before daylight with the horses and wagon, and that night he came home with a wagonload of fish.³¹ The big wagon box³² was piled full, and some of the fish were as big as Laura. Pa had gone to Lake Pepin³³ and caught them all with a net.

Ma cut large slices of flaky white fish, without one bone, for Laura and Mary. They all feasted on³⁴ the good, fresh fish. All they did not eat fresh was salted down in barrels for the winter.

Pa owned a pig. It ran wild in the Big Woods, living on acorns and nuts and roots. Now he caught it and put it in a pen made of logs, to fatten. He would butcher it as soon as the weather was cold enough to keep the pork frozen.

Once in the middle of the night Laura woke up and heard the pig squealing. Pa jumped out of bed, snatched his gun from the wall, and ran outdoors. Then Laura heard the gun go off, once, twice.

When Pa came back, he told what had happened. He had seen a big black bear standing beside the pigpen. The bear was reaching into the pen to grab the pig, and the pig was running and squealing. Pa saw this in the starlight and he fired quickly. But the light was dim and in his haste he missed the bear. The bear ran away into the woods, not hurt at all,