



Chapter 6 - by Kay Hively

A sunny day did come, and Abe planted his pumpkin seeds once again. Sarah planted the corn seeds that had been saved from the mud. Even though the little gardeners had fewer seeds, their garden did well, helping feed the family through their first summer in Indiana.

Abe thought one of the best things about Indiana was being around more people. All summer there were picnics and parties. At every event someone had a fiddle, which made happy tunes for dancing. Abe's father loved to dance. He often danced with Sarah, and she soon became a good dancer as well.

Abe didn't like dancing. He was shy around girls, but he liked being with other boys. More than anything else, he loved to talk. He was a great storyteller and always knew a good joke.

With his sharp mind, Abe could remember almost everything he read. He would make up stories, using things he had read in books. Everyone thought Abe was "a fine fella."

Even though he was young, Abe was popular and respected by all the boys and young men. Since he had been a woodcutter all his young life, he was very strong. This made him a good wrestler. Often, during the dance, Abe and the other boys would go outside and wrestle.



One day, after the Lincolns had been to a party, Sarah complained to Abe.

She said the girls had to dance with each other because the boys were outside with Abe. She said the girls wanted to spend time with the boys. Abe just smiled at his sister and jokingly offered to teach

Sarah how to wrestle. Then, he said, she could spend more time with the boys. Sarah did not appreciate Abe's joke.

As the summer of 1819 came to an end, Abe and Sarah harvested the garden.

Every piece of food was needed for winter. When the corn was picked and the husks removed, Sarah emptied out the old husks from all the mattresses and filled them with fresh corn husks.

Abe didn't like corn husk mattresses. When they were fresh, they crackled and poked him in his sleep. Then after a while, the husks broke down and the bed was flat and hard.

Some day, Abe thought, he would have a fine silk

mattress in a big fine house. When winter set in, everyone worked hard. Abe helped his father outdoors, and he helped Sarah in the house. He also read whenever he had a book or newspaper.

Then, one cold day in November, Mr. Lincoln said he was going on a trip. He said Dennis Hanks, a cousin who lived nearby, would watch after Sarah and Abe.

Only once before had Thomas Lincoln left his family. On that first trip he had business at the country court, and he brought home some supplies. Abe remembered that Mr. Lincoln had brought two newspapers home from that trip. Now his father was going away again. Abe sure hoped he would bring back something to read.

Next Week: Chapter 7 - The Family Grows

Things to Think About and Do

1. Abe was a good wrestler. Ask someone in your family or your physical education teacher if they know how to arm wrestle or leg wrestle. Do you know someone who is a good storyteller like Abe Lincoln? Get together with a friend and see who can tell the best story.
2. Do you think Mr. Lincoln will bring Abe a newspaper to read? If Abe could see your local paper, what part do you think he would like best?
3. If you could read a newspaper from anywhere, where would that be? With adult permission, use the Internet to look for an online version of a newspaper from that community. The Newseum, a museum in Washington, D.C., has links to front pages from more than 450 newspapers worldwide at www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages.

GLEs: R11, L1A, L1B, L2A, PA1B

Learn more about Abraham Lincoln by visiting the following Web sites:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/126libo/>
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/abrahamlincoln/>
<http://home.att.net/~rjnorton/Lincoln77.html>
http://www.conservapedia.com/Abraham_Lincoln

Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofourth-Stewart are both from Neosho, MO. Produced by the Missouri Press Foundation, ©2009