



An Old Secret



Chapter Two - by Russ and Kay Hively

As Joe approached the back door, he could see a wooden crate sitting on the porch. He did not remember it being on the porch last night. Maybe Daddy or Grant had put it there this morning, Joe thought. When Joe reached the back door, he half-heartedly looked inside the crate. Joe was shocked to see that it was full of food.

Joe hauled the crate into the kitchen and started searching through it. The crate had cans of vegetables, flour, sugar and a large slab of bacon. Joe didn't know where all this food had come from, but he would ask Daddy and Grant. Joe started putting the food away. When Daddy came in a little later, Joe was stirring the oatmeal. Mr. Porter looked at the jar of jam sitting on the table and asked where it came from.

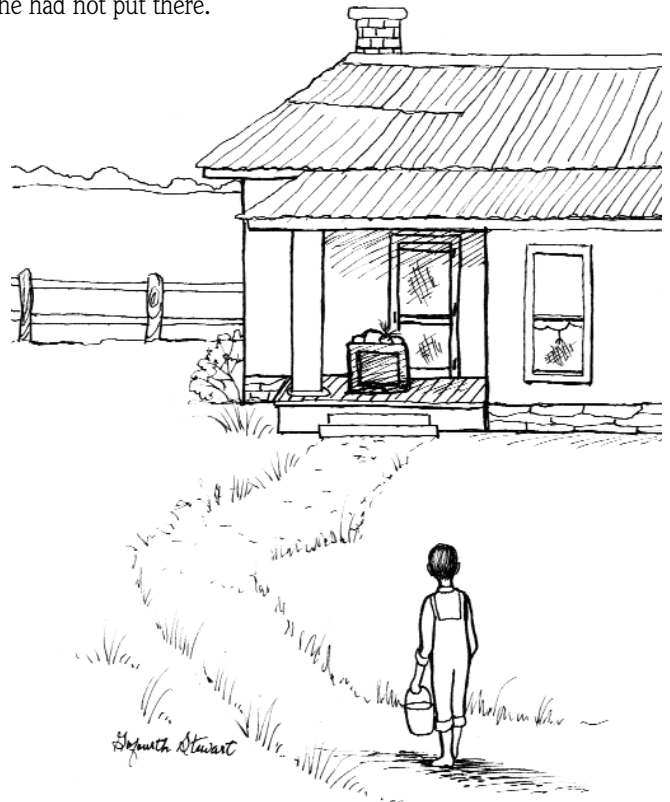
Joe told Daddy that he got it out of the crate of groceries he found on the back porch. Both Daddy and Joe realized that neither of them knew where the food came from. When Grant came in with the milk, he said he didn't know anything about it either. Over breakfast the three of them tried to figure out who had left the food. No one had a good answer to the question.

When they finished eating, the trio headed to the fields to pick watermelon. The sun was now fully awake and the sky was a bright blue. A scissortailed fly catcher sat on the fence. Joe liked birds, but he really liked the thought of flying. He had heard stories from men who had flown during the war. He wondered what it would be like to fly. The sky was so big, and the idea of being able to go anywhere you wanted in any direction excited Joe. He never said anything to anyone about flying, but he hoped someday he would have a chance to fly.

Joe, Grant and Mr. Porter picked watermelon until the truck was full. Then Daddy dropped Grant off at the house to help his mother in the garden while he and Joe took the watermelons to town. Daddy gave Joe a list of things to get at the store while he drove to the depot to unload the melons.

Joe liked going to the store. The owner, Mr. Wardlaw, was always nice, and Joe got to see other people in the store. Joe got the things on his list, signed the credit book and helped box the groceries. Then Mr. Wardlaw asked how his mother was doing and how they were doing with the melon crop. While answering Mr. Wardlaw's questions, Joe heard the truck horn honking. Grabbing the grocery box, Joe said goodbye to the grocer and

climbed in the truck beside his father. During the ride home, Joe looked in the grocery box and saw something in the bottom that he had not put there.



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Things to Think About and Do

- Groceries were found in a wooden crate and were carried out of the store in a cardboard box. What do you carry groceries in? Why are boxes and crates no longer used? Discuss this with your school class.
- Joe signed a credit book to get the groceries. What do people use today instead of a credit book to allow them to pay for things later? Find out why this method of payment often causes problems for users.

STANDARDS – G2:3; S:8; G4:3; SS:4

Next Week: Chapter Three – Sweet surprise.