

the

# WAR

*that never was*

## Chapter Six by Kay Hively

Snow covered the ground the next morning. Ethan and his father dressed warmly to do chores. As he walked across the yard, Ethan made footprints in the snow. He hoped more snow would come. If a big snow came, there would be no war, he hoped.

After the animals were fed and the cow was milked, Ethan and his father returned to the cabin. After breakfast, Ethan's father said he was going to St. Francisville to see about selling some of the hogs.

Ethan wanted go with his father, but his mother said he had to stay home. Ethan knew why. It was time to start school.

There was no school nearby, so everyone had school at home. The twins liked school, but Ethan would rather go fishing or just be outside. He could read and was good with numbers, but he knew of better things to do. He would rather work than go to school.

Mr. Howard took his sack lunch and kissed everyone good-bye. Ethan went with his father to the barn and watched him ride away.

Ethan's mother had moved the table near the window so there would be good light for school work. The fireplace made the cabin nice and warm. On the table, Ethan found a pencil and a page of arithmetic problems. His mother said if he did well on the problems, she would give him harder problems to work.

Ethan sat down and began to work. Writing paper was hard to get on the frontier, so he was careful not to waste any. He could hear the twins whispering. They were learning to write the alphabet on a slate tablet. He heard Alice scold Andy because he made his "E" backward.

Soon Ethan was lost in his work. It had been five months since he had worked on his lessons so he had to think hard.

The cabin became very quiet. Ethan's mother was sewing, the twins were reading and Ethan was working his problems. The silence was suddenly broken by the sounds of horses. Ethan looked out the window and saw a hundred men on horseback. Behind them were four wagons pulled by mules.

It was the Missouri Militia.

Ethan ran out of the cabin to meet the men. At the front of the group were Uncle Tom and Uncle Albert. They told Ethan they were on their way to war in the honey woods. They said the Missouri soldiers would use the old honey camp as their base.

Ethan told his uncles that his father was gone for the day. They told Ethan to take good care of his mother and the twins. Then, with a wave and a salute, the army moved on down the trail.

The honey war was about to start.



*Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofourth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri. Produced in partnership with this newspaper and the Missouri Press Foundation with support from Verizon Foundation. Copyright 2002.*

### Classroom Extensions

#### Things to Think About and Do –

- Ethan has to work hard. Name some of the chores he might have to do on the farm. Do you have to do chores? Make a list of the chores you do at home.
- Why did the twins use a slate tablet? Think of ways you can save paper, and tell why you should try to save paper.

**Next Week: Chapter Seven –  
Off to Market**