

the

WAR

that never was

Chapter Seven by Kay Hively

It was dark when Ethan's father returned. Ethan could hardly wait to tell his father about seeing the army. His father listened as Ethan told about the men and wagons and where the army camp would be.

Mr. Howard patted his son on the back and praised him for being the "man of the house"—and for a good arithmetic report.

Then Ethan listened as his father told about his trip. His father said hogs were bringing a good price with all the talk of war. Then he said that because Uncle Albert and Uncle Tom had gone off to fight, Ethan would have to help take the hogs to market the next day.

It was still dark when Ethan got up the next morning. He and his father slipped out of the cabin and loaded six big hogs in the wagon. Ethan's mother handed them a basket of food as they left.

On the wagon seat, Ethan wrapped his scarf around his face to stay warm. His father gave him a long pole and told him to tap firmly on any hog that made a fuss. But the hogs seemed to enjoy the ride. They snuggled down in the straw and slept as peacefully as baby lambs. Ethan was glad the hogs were happy. He didn't know what would happen if they tried to climb out of the wagon.

The two big horses pulling the wagon liked the cold weather and the snow that was falling. They trotted right along without any encouragement.

Along the road, Ethan counted 22 cabins. At every place, people were working. Everyone waved at Ethan and his father, but they could not stop and visit.

When they got to St. Francisville, Ethan's father drove the horses down to the river where there were some big pens. A sign said, "Hogs bought here."

Ethan's father soon sold his hogs. Then Ethan helped get the hogs into the pens. With the job finished, they started back up the street. In front of the general store, Ethan's father stopped and they went inside.

Mr. Howard picked up a shiny new milk pail. He let Ethan choose candy for himself and the twins. Ethan's father also bought several tablets of paper.

Ethan knew what they were for.

As they started for home, Ethan opened the food basket. He and his father ate as they rode home on the wagon seat. In the afternoon, the sun began to shine. Ethan thought everything looked pretty with the sun shining on the snow. The snow sparkled just like the stars twinkle at night.

Real stars were twinkling when Ethan and his father got home. Ethan was very tired, but very happy. He would remember his trip to town for a long, long time.



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Classroom Extensions

Things to Think About and Do –

- Ethan shopped in a "general store." What is a general store? Name ten things you would find in a general store.
- Why did the snow sparkle like stars? Look in a science book for the answer. Draw a picture of a snow scene like Ethan might have seen on his trip to town.

**Next Week: Chapter Eight –
In the Army Camp**