

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

By Carole L. Cooney

Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States of America. He was a pioneer boy living on a farm in Kentucky until his family was forced to move to Indiana. Life was very difficult because the land had to be cleared and a house built. Then there was farming, hunting, fishing and chores. As he grew, he loved listening to stories told by older folk. He, himself, became a great storyteller. He told the story about the day he was fishing and had caught a little fish which he was taking home. He met a soldier in the road and having always been told at home to be kind to soldiers, he gave the soldier his fish.

Setting: The farm; the road

Characters:

Narrator

Father, Thomas Lincoln

Mother, Nancy Hanks

Abraham

Narrator: Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, was a pioneer boy who was born on a farm in Kentucky. Due to difficult times, the family was forced to move west to Indiana during the winter. Anxious to get the family settled, Thomas decided to build a three-sided shelter.

Father: Mother, we need to clear this patch of land before the heavy snows come.

Abraham: May I help, Father?

Father: Certainly, son. Being age 7, you're now old enough to handle an ax, so take this one and go chop down those trees over there. They're young so it shouldn't take you very long.

Narrator: Abraham grabbed the ax and started swinging. Because Abraham was tall and strong, he was a great help to his father clearing the forest. Many days were spent preparing the trees for a log cabin. Once the snow let up and the first green shoots of spring appeared, it was time to assemble the logs.

Mother: Thomas, I'll be needing some meat to go along with our vegetables for supper. Do you suppose Abraham can catch up a fish or two?

Father: Yes, I think he has the skill to do so. Abraham! Abraham! Where is that boy?

Mother: You might try calling down by the pond.

Narrator: Father walked down to the pond to find Abraham reading a small book.

Father: Abraham, put that book away. Your mother needs a catch for supper. Will you hurry and bait your hook?

Abraham: Yes, Father. Did I tell you I caught a beauty the other day and as I was walking home I saw a soldier who looked very, very unhappy and tired? Thinking it would cheer him up, I gave him my fish. Father, you should have seen the smile on his face. It would've lit up an entire barn in the dead of night.

Father: Abraham I didn't hear that story. It's a good one. You're certainly a good story teller. Now hurry and catch a fish so we'll make your Mother happy.

Narrator: Abraham caught another beauty which did make his mother very happy. Since the Lincoln family was living in the wilderness there were no stores or bakeries near by. The closest mill was seven miles away.

Mother: Father, I'm almost out of corn flour. Would you ask Abraham to get some?

Father: Mother, you know how far away it is. I'm always fearful of those bears and other creatures lurking in the woods. It's not safe to send him.

Mother: Then saddle up a horse for *me* because we need that flour!

Father: Calm down, Mother. I'll saddle up Gallant, our best horse. That way I'll know Abraham will get there.

Mother: AND back!

Narrator: Abraham was excited to make the seven mile journey to the Mill. He set out very early in the morning before sun rise and arrived in the early afternoon. He took the heavy sacks of corn to the miller and had it ground into fine flour. Then it was time for him to return home.

Mother: Abraham, I'm so glad you made the trip safely. Did any harm come to you?

Abraham: No, Mother. I didn't see any wild animals or any other creatures. It was a wonderful trip. Thank you for trusting me.

Father: Now, it's back to work. There is a large pile of poles in back of the house. Take your ax and split them for fence rails. If you work fast enough, we can make the fence tomorrow.

Mother: Father, you're working the boy too hard.

Abraham: No, Mother, you know I love to swing my ax.

Narrator: Swinging his ax *was* one of Abraham's favorite chores. Later when he was a presidential candidate, Abraham Lincoln was known as the Railsplitter.