

THE SANDMAN
His Farm Stories



LITTLE JOHN

The Sandman
HIS FARM STORIES

BY

William J. Hopkins

YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

Cover and arrangement © 2009 Yesterday's Classics, LLC.

This edition, first published in 2009 by Yesterday's Classics, an imprint of Yesterday's Classics, LLC, is an unabridged republication of the text originally published by The Page Company in 1902. For the complete listing of the books that are published by Yesterday's Classics, please visit www.yesterdaysclassics.com. Yesterday's Classics is the publishing arm of the Baldwin Online Children's Literature Project which presents the complete text of hundreds of classic books for children at www.mainlesson.com.

ISBN-10: 1-59915-300-9

ISBN-13: 978-1-59915-300-1

Yesterday's Classics, LLC
PO Box 3418
Chapel Hill, NC 27515

To
that
Little John
of to-day
who has inspired these stories
of that other
Little John
of long ago
this volume is
most affectionately
dedicated

INTRODUCTION

When little John and little Charles lived on a farm, everything they did took lots of time and lots of work. But nobody seemed to mind. They had fun along with their work.

When Aunt Deborah wanted corn meal to make johnny-cake, Uncle John first had to haul the corn to the mill in an oxcart. Then he hauled it slowly home again. But even this couldn't be done until after he had raised the corn in the field and then harvested it.

Aunt Deborah's kitchen was not like any that we have today. Instead of a stove she and Aunt Phyllis cooked over a fireplace. And they didn't dare to let the fire go out, for there were no matches in those days! If the fire did go out, how do you suppose they started it again?

When little John and little Charles wanted a day of fun, they went with Uncle Solomon in his boat on the big pond. He rowed them to a place where the water was not very deep. After the boys had taken off their clothes, Uncle Solomon lifted each boy and threw him into the water.

It was fun to go into the maple-sugar woods in the early spring, when the maple sap began to run. Uncle John always made enough syrup and sugar in the spring to last all year, for there wasn't a store near by where he could buy more.

Little John thought that the most fun of all was to ride into town with his father to take the farm produce to market. This day came at the end of summer, when all the ripe fruits and vegetables and other foods had been gathered. The trip to town and back took all day.

You can see that little John and little Charles had a very different life from yours. That is why it is fun to read about it.

CONTENTS

THE OXEN STORY	1
THE FINE-HOMINY STORY.....	5
THE APPLE STORY.....	13
THE WHOLE WHEAT STORY	19
THE STUMP STORY	25
THE HORSIE STORY	28
THE LOG STORY	32
THE UNCLE SAM STORY.....	37
THE MARKET STORY	40
THE MAPLE-SUGAR STORY	47
THE RAIL FENCE STORY.....	54
THE COW STORY.....	59
THE HAY STORY	67
THE FIREPLACE STORY.....	73

THE BAKING STORY	78
THE SWIMMING STORY.....	83
THE CHICKEN STORY.....	89
THE SHAWL STORY	94
THE BUYING-FARM STORY.....	101
THE BUTTER STORY	104
THE BEAN-POLE STORY	108

PREFACE

WHATEVER may be thought of these stories by older people, they have served, with some others, to induce a certain little boy to go to sleep, and for nearly three years my one listener has heard them repeated many times, and his interest has never flagged. As the farm stories slowly grew in number, they entirely displaced the other stories, and that farm has become as real in the mind of my audience as it was in fact when little John was driving the cows, or planting the corn, seventy-five years ago.

The detail, which may seem excessive to an older critic, was in every case, until I had learned to put it in at the start, the result of a searching cross-examination. If the bars were not put up again, the cows might get out; and if the oxen did not pass, on their return, all the familiar objects, how did they get back to the barn? It is the young critics that I hope to please, those whose years count no more than six. If they like these farm stories half as well as my own young critic likes them, I shall be satisfied.

WILLIAM J. HOPKINS.

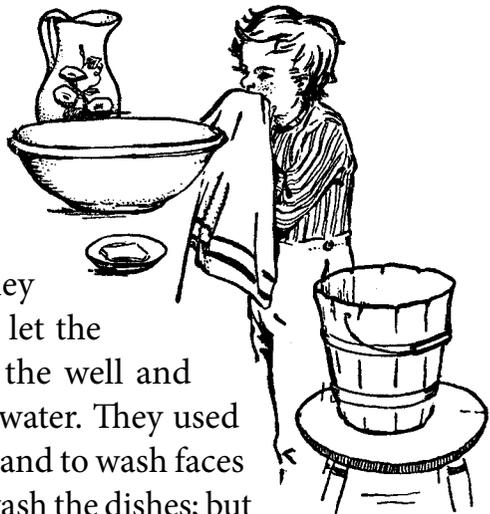
CHAPTER I

THE OXEN STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse, and it was painted white and had green blinds, and it stood not far from the road. And in the fence was a wide gate to let the wagons through to the barn. And the wagons, going through, had made a track that led up past the kitchen door and past the shed and past the barn and past the orchard to the wheat-field.

Not far from the kitchen door was a well, with a bucket tied by a rope to the end of a great long pole. And when they wanted water, they let the bucket down into the well and pulled it up full of water. They used this water to drink, and to wash faces and hands, and to wash the dishes; but



THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

it wasn't good to wash clothes, because it wouldn't make good soap-suds. To get water to wash the clothes, they had a great enormous hogshead at the corner of the house. And when it rained, the rain fell on the roof, and ran down the roof to the gutter, and ran down the gutter to the spout, and ran down the spout to the hogshead. And when they wanted water to wash the clothes, they took some of the water out of the hogshead.

But when it had not rained for a long time, there was no water in the hogshead. Then they got out the drag and put a barrel on it, and the old oxen came out from the barn, and put their heads down low; and Uncle John put the yoke over their necks, and put the bows under and fastened them, and hooked the chain of the drag to the yoke. There wasn't any harness, and there weren't any reins. Then he said: "Gee up there, Buck; gee up there, Star." And the old oxen started walking slowly along, dragging the drag, with the barrel on it, along the ground. And Uncle John walked along beside them, carrying a long whip or a long stick with a sharp end; and little John walked along by the drag.

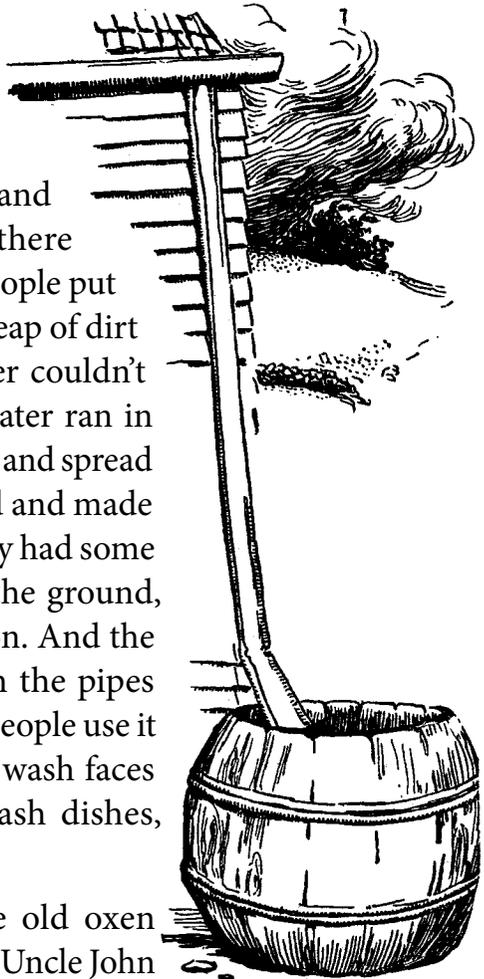


THE OXEN STORY

And they walked slowly out of the yard into the road and along the road until they came to a big field with a stone wall around it, and a big gate in the stone wall. It wasn't a regular gate, but at each side of the open place in the wall there was a post with holes in it. And long bars went across and rested in the holes. And the old oxen stopped, and Uncle John took the bars down and laid them on the ground. Then the oxen started and walked through the gate and across the field until they came to the river. And when they came to the river, they stopped.

The little river and the field are not there now, because the people put a great enormous heap of dirt across, and the river couldn't get through. The water ran in and couldn't get out, and spread out all over the field and made a big pond. And they had some great pipes under the ground, all the way to Boston. And the water runs through the pipes to Boston, and the people use it there to drink, and wash faces and hands, and wash dishes, and wash clothes.

Well, when the old oxen stopped at the river, Uncle John



THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

took his bucket and dipped it in the river, and poured the water into the barrel until the barrel was full. Then he said "Gee up there," and the old oxen started slowly walking across the field. And the drag tilted around on the rough ground, and the water splashed about in the barrel, and slopped over the top of the barrel on to the drag, and on to the ground. And the oxen walked out of the gate into the road and stopped. And Uncle John put the bars back into the holes, and the old oxen started again and walked slowly along the road, until they came to the farm-house, and in at the big gate, and up to the kitchen door, and there they stopped. And Uncle John unhooked the chain from the yoke, and took out the bows, and took off the yoke, and the old oxen walked into the barn and went to sleep. And they left the drag with the barrel of water by the kitchen door.

And the next morning, when they wanted water to wash the clothes, there was the barrel of water, all ready.

And that's all.

CHAPTER II

THE FINE-HOMINY STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse, and it was painted white and had green blinds, and it stood not far from the road. And in the fence was a wide gate to let the wagons through to the barn. And the wagons, going through, had made a track that led up past the kitchen door and past the shed and past the barn and past the orchard to the wheat-field.

Not far from the house there was a field where corn grew; and when the winter was over and the snow was gone and it was beginning to get warm, Uncle John got the old oxen out of the barn. And the oxen put their heads down, and Uncle John put the yoke over and the bows under, and he put the plough on the drag and hooked the drag chain to the yoke. Then he said: "Gee up there, Buck; gee up there, Star."

So the old oxen started walking slowly along the wagon track and out of the gate into the road. Uncle Solomon and Uncle John walked along beside them,

THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

and little John walked behind; and they walked along until they came to the corn-field. Then the oxen stopped and Uncle John took the bars down out of the holes in the posts, and the oxen geed up again through the gate into the corn-field.

Then Uncle John unhooked the chain from the drag and hooked it to the plough and said "Gee up" again, and the oxen started walking along across the field, dragging the plough. Uncle Solomon held the handles, and the plough dug into the ground and turned up the dirt into a great heap on one side and left a deep furrow—a kind of a long hollow—all across the field where it had gone. And the old oxen walked across the field, around and around, making the furrow and turning up the dirt, until they had been all over the field.

Then Uncle John unhooked the chain from the plough and hooked it on to the harrow. The harrow is a big kind of a frame that has diggers like little ploughs sticking down all over the under side of it. And the oxen dragged the harrow over the field and the little teeth broke up the lumps of dirt and smoothed it over and made it soft, so that the seeds could grow.

Then Uncle John unhooked the chain from the harrow and hooked it to the drag and put the plough on the drag and said "Gee up," and the oxen walked along through the gateway and along the road until they came to the farm-house. And they went in at the wide gate and up the wagon track until they came to the shed, and there they stopped. Then Uncle John

THE FINE-HOMINY STORY

unhooked the chain and took off the yoke, and the old oxen went into the barn and went to sleep; and Uncle John put the drag in the shed.

The next day Uncle John took a great bag full of corn, and put it over his shoulder and started walking along to the corn-field; and little John walked behind. And when they got to the corn-field, Uncle John put the great bag of corn on the ground and put some in a little bag and gave it to little John. Then Uncle John began walking across the field and little John walked behind. And at every step Uncle John stopped and made five little holes in the ground; and then he took another step and made five other little holes. And little John came after and he put one grain of corn in each hole and brushed the dirt over. And they went all over the field, putting the corn in the ground, and when it was all covered over, they went away and left it.



THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

Then the rain came and fell on the field and sank into the ground, and the sun shone and warmed it, and the corn began to grow. And soon the little green blades pushed through the ground like grass, and got bigger and bigger and taller and taller until when the summer was almost over they were great corn-stalks as high as Uncle John's head; and on each stalk were the



ears of corn, wrapped up tight in green leaves, and at the top was the tassel that waved about. Then, when the tassel got yellow and brown and the leaves began to dry up, Uncle John knew it was time to gather the corn, for it was ripe.

Then Uncle Solomon and Uncle John came out with great heavy, sharp knives and cut down all the cornstalks and pulled the ears of corn off the stalks. And little John came and helped pull off the leaves from around the ears. Then the old oxen came out of the barn and Uncle John put the yoke over their necks and the bows up under and hooked the tongue of the ox-cart to the yoke. And he said "Gee up there," and the old oxen began walking slowly along, dragging the cart;

THE FINE-HOMINY STORY

and they went out the wide gate and along the road to the corn-field.

Then Uncle John and Uncle Solomon tossed the ears of corn into the cart; and when it was full, the old oxen started again, walking slowly along, back to the farm-house, in through the wide gate and up the wagon track and in at the wide door of the barn. And Uncle John put all the ears of corn into a kind of pen in the barn and the old oxen dragged the cart back to the corn-field to get it filled again; and so they did until all the ears of corn were in the pen.

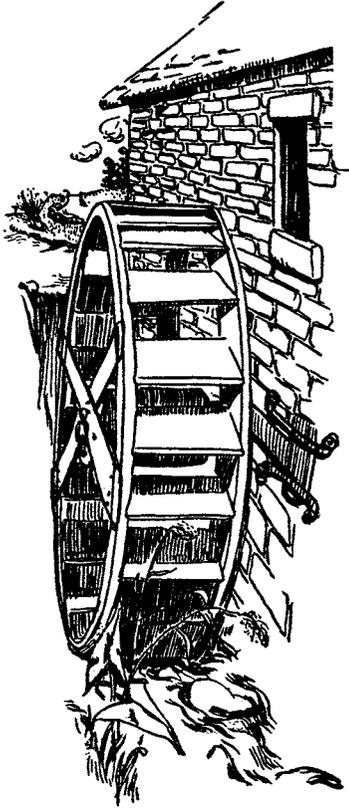
And then Uncle John unhooked the tongue of the cart and put the cart in the shed, and he took off the yoke, and the oxen went into the barn and went to sleep.

The next morning Uncle Solomon and Uncle John and little John all went out to the barn and sat on little stools—low stools with three legs, that they sit on when they milk the cows—and rubbed the kernels of corn off the cobs. Then Uncle John put all the corn into bags and put it away; and he put the cobs in the shed, to use in making fires.

Then, one morning, Uncle John got out the oxen, and they put their heads down, and he put the yoke over their necks and the bows up under, and he hooked the tongue of the ox-cart to the yoke; and he said “Gee up there,” and they walked into the barn. Then Uncle John put all the bags of corn into the cart, and he put little John up on the cart, and the old oxen started again

THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

and walked slowly along, down the wagon track, out the wide gate, and into the road.



Then they turned along the road, not the way to the field where they got the water, but the other way. And they walked a long way until they came to a place where there was a building beside a little river. And on the outside of the building was a great enormous wheel, so big that it reached down and dipped into the water. And when the water in the little river flowed along, it made the great wheel turn around; and this made a great heavy stone inside the building turn around on top of another stone. Now the building is called a Mill,

and the big wheel outside is called a Mill-Wheel, and the stones are called Mill-Stones; and the man that takes care of the mill is called the Miller.

Now the miller was sitting in the doorway of the mill; and when he saw Uncle John and little John and the ox-cart filled with bags, he got up and came out, and called to Uncle John: "Good morning. What can I do for you this morning?"

THE FINE-HOMINY STORY

And Uncle John said: "I've got some corn to grind."

So the oxen stopped, and little John got down, and the miller and Uncle John took all the bags of corn into the mill, and the oxen lay down and went to sleep. Then Uncle John and little John sat down on some logs in the mill, and the miller asked Uncle John how he wanted the corn ground. So Uncle John said he wanted some of it just cracked, and some of it ground into fine hominy, and some of it into meal.



Then the miller fixed the stones so they could just crack the corn, and he poured the corn in at a place where it would run down between the stones, and he started the stone turning. When the corn was cracked, he put it into the bags again, and tied them up.

Then he fixed the stones so they would grind the corn into fine hominy, and he poured the corn in, and it came out ground into fine hominy. Then he put the fine hominy into the bags again and tied them up.

THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

Then he fixed the stones so they would grind the corn into meal, and he poured the corn in, and it came out ground into meal. Then he put the meal into the bags again and tied them up. And the miller kept two bags of each kind to pay for grinding the corn; but the other bags he put into the ox-cart.

Then the oxen got up and little John was lifted up and the old oxen started walking slowly along home again. And they walked a long time until they came to the wide gate, and they turned in at the gate and up the wagon track to the kitchen door, and there they stopped. And Uncle John took one of the bags of meal into the kitchen and gave it to Aunt Deborah.

And he said: "Here's your meal, Deborah."

And Aunt Deborah said: "All right. I'll make some Johnny-cake for breakfast to-morrow."

And the rest of the meal was put away in the store-room until they wanted it; for they had enough to last them all winter and some to take to market besides. Then Uncle John unhooked the tongue of the cart from the yoke and put the cart in the shed. And he took off the yoke and the old oxen went into the barn and went to sleep.

And that's all.

CHAPTER III

THE APPLE STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse, and it was painted white and had green blinds, and it stood not far from the road. In the fence was a wide gate to let the wagons through to the barn. And the wagons, going through, had made a track that went up past the kitchen door and past the shed and past the barn and past the orchard to the wheat-field.

In the orchard grew many apple-trees. Some had yellow apples and some had green apples and some had red apples and some had brown apples. And the yellow apples got ripe before the summer was over; but the green apples and the red apples and the brown apples were not ripe until the summer was over and it was beginning to get cold.

So, one day, after the summer was over and it was beginning to get cold, Uncle John saw that the apples on one of the trees were ready to be picked. And they were red apples. So he got out the old oxen, and they

THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

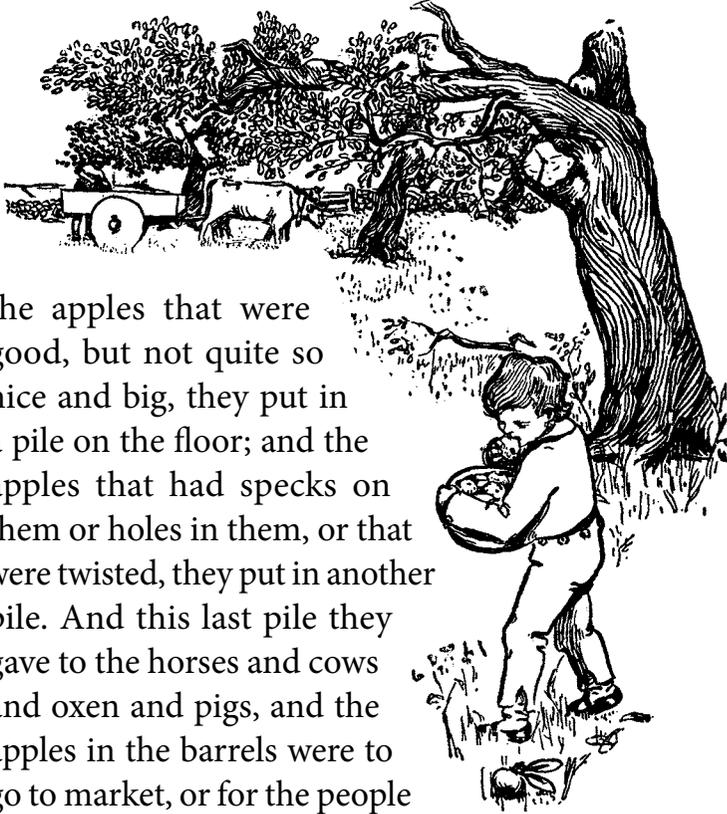
put their heads down and he put the yoke over and the bows under and hooked the tongue of the ox-cart to the yoke. Then he said: "Gee up there, Buck; gee up there, Star." And the old oxen began walking slowly along, past the barn to the orchard. And they turned in through the wide gate into the orchard and went along until they came to the right tree.

Then they stopped and Uncle John took a basket and climbed up into the tree. And he picked the apples very carefully and put them into the basket. And when the basket was full, he climbed down from the tree and emptied the basket carefully into the cart. Then he climbed up again and filled the basket again; and so he did until the cart was full. Then Uncle John said: "Gee up there;" and the old oxen started and turned around and walked slowly back to the barn and in at the big door. Then Uncle John took all the apples out of the cart and put them in a kind of pen, and the old oxen started again and walked slowly back to the orchard.

So Uncle John gathered all the apples from that tree and put them in the pen in the barn. Then he unhooked the tongue of the cart and took off the yoke, and the old oxen went to their places and went to sleep.

The next morning, Uncle Solomon and Uncle John and little John all went out to the barn, and they took little three-legged stools that had one end higher than the other,—the kind they used when they milked the cows,—and they sat on these stools and looked over all the apples, one by one. The apples that were very nice indeed they put in some barrels that were there; and

THE APPLE STORY



the apples that were good, but not quite so nice and big, they put in a pile on the floor; and the apples that had specks on them or holes in them, or that were twisted, they put in another pile. And this last pile they gave to the horses and cows and oxen and pigs, and the apples in the barrels were to go to market, or for the people to eat.

Then Uncle John got out the old oxen and they put their heads down low, and he put the yoke over and the bows under and hooked the tongue of the ox-cart to the yoke. And he put into the cart all the apples that were in the first pile, those that were good but not quite big enough to put in the barrels, and he put two empty kegs—little barrels—on the top of the load. Then the old oxen started walking slowly along, out of the barn and along the wagon track past the shed and past the kitchen door and through the gate into the road. And they turned along the road, not the way to the field

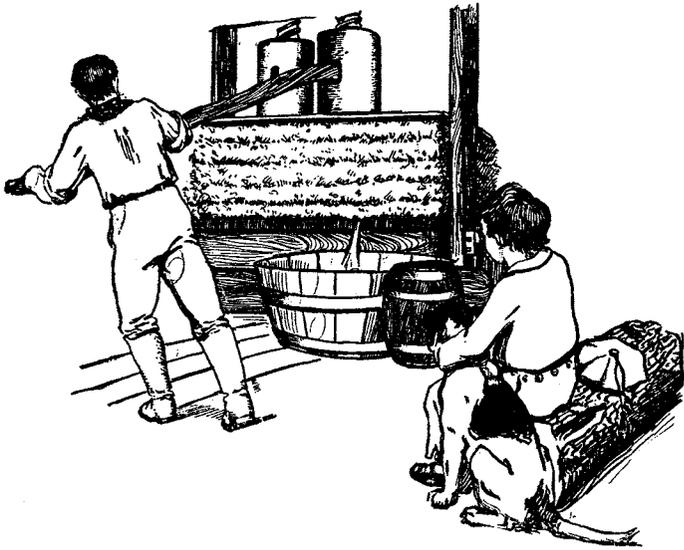
THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

where they went to get water, but the other way. And Uncle John walked beside, and little John ran ahead, and they went along until they came to a little house by the side of the road, and there they stopped. Then Uncle John opened the door of the little house and they went in. And inside there was nothing but a log against the wall, to sit on, and in the middle of the room a kind of a thing they called a cider-press. It had a place to put the apples in, and a flat cover that came down on top, and a screw and a long handle above. Besides the cider-press, there was a chopper to chop the apples into little pieces.

Then little John sat down on the log and Uncle John put the apples in the chopper and chopped them up fine. Then he put some chopped apples, with some straw over them, in the place that was meant for apples, and then he took hold of the long handle, and walked around and around. That made the screw turn and the cover squeeze down on the apples so that the juice ran out below into the keg that was put there. And when the juice was all squeezed out of those apples, he walked around the other way, holding the handle, and that made the cover lift up. Then he took out the squeezed apples and put in some other apples and squeezed them the same way. And when all the apples in the cart had been squeezed, both kegs were full of juice. And they call the juice cider.

So Uncle John put the great stoppers that they call bungs into the bung-holes in the kegs, so that the cider would not run out. Then he put the kegs in the cart, and little John came out of the little house and Uncle John

THE APPLE STORY



shut the door, and the old oxen turned around and walked slowly along until they came to the gate, and they walked up the track to the kitchen door, and there they stopped. Then Uncle John and Uncle Solomon took the kegs down into the cellar, and they took out a little bung near the bottom of one of the kegs, and put in a wooden spigot—a kind of a faucet. Then they set that keg on a shelf, so that a pitcher or a mug could go under the spigot.

Then Uncle John took the yoke off the oxen and they went into the barn and went to sleep.

After supper that evening, Uncle Solomon and Uncle John were sitting in the sitting-room and Uncle John spoke to little John, and said: "John, I think I would like a drink of cider."

So little John took a pitcher down into the cellar,

THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

and his mother held a light while he put the pitcher under the spigot and turned the spigot; and the cider ran into the pitcher, and when enough had run in he turned the spigot the other way and the cider stopped running. Then he carried the cider up to his father, and his father drank it.

And when Uncle John had drunk the cider, he said to Uncle Solomon: "Father, that's pretty good cider; you'd better have some."



And Uncle Solomon said: "Don't care if I do." So little John had to go down cellar again and get another pitcher of cider.

Those two kegs of cider lasted for a while and then more apples were ripe and they made enough cider to last all winter and some to send to market besides.

And that's all.

CHAPTER IV

THE WHOLE WHEAT STORY

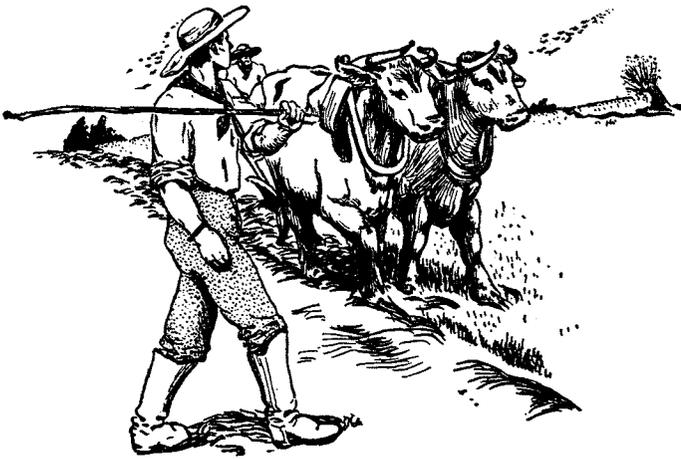


ONCE upon a time there was a farmhouse, and it was painted white and had green blinds, and it stood not far from the road. And in the fence was a wide gate to let the wagons through to the barn. And the wagons, going through, had made a little track that went up past the kitchen door and past the shed and past the barn and past the orchard to a gate in a stone wall, where the bars were across; and through that field and another gate where the bars were across, into the maple-sugar woods. And in that field wheat grew.

When the summer was nearly over and the corn and most of the other things had got ripe and had been gathered, Uncle John got out the old oxen and put the yoke over their necks and the bows up under; and he hooked the drag chain to the yoke and put the plough on the drag and said: "Gee up there, Buck; gee up there, Star." And the old oxen started slowly along past the barn and past the orchard to the wheat-field.

THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

Then Uncle John took the plough off the drag and unhooked the chain from the drag and hooked it to the plough. Uncle Solomon held the handles of the plough and the old oxen started walking slowly across the field dragging the plough; and the plough dug into the ground and turned the earth up at one side and made a deep furrow where it had gone. So they went all around the field and around until it was all ploughed.



Then Uncle John unhooked the chain from the plough and hooked it to the harrow; and the old oxen started and walked slowly back and forth across the field, and the teeth of the harrow broke up the lumps of dirt and made it all soft. And when the field was all harrowed, Uncle John unhooked the chain from the harrow and hooked it to the drag and put the plough on the drag, and the old oxen walked slowly back to the barn. And Uncle John unhooked the chain and took off the yoke; and the oxen went to their places in the barn and went to sleep, and the drag was in the shed.

THE WHOLE WHEAT STORY

The next morning, Uncle John put some whole wheat in a big bag and put the bag over his shoulder and walked along past the orchard to the wheat-field. And when he got to the wheat-field, he put the bag down on the ground and put some of the wheat in a little bag that he had hanging from his shoulder. And then he began walking across the field, and as he walked along he took up a handful of wheat and threw it far out so that it scattered over the ground. And that way he scattered all the wheat so that it lay in the soft ground, and then he went away and left it.



And the rain fell and the sun shone on the field and the wheat began to grow. And soon the little green blades pushed up through the ground like grass; and the wheat grew higher and higher until it was as high as little John's knees. And then the summer was all over and it was beginning to get cold; so the wheat stopped growing and stayed just as high as that all winter and the snow covered it.

And when the winter was over and it began to get warm, the snow melted away and the wheat began to grow again; and it got taller and taller until it was as tall as Uncle John's waist. And then the little tassels at the

THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

top of each stem got yellow and brown and the wheat was ripe. This was in the beginning of the summer.

Then Uncle John and Uncle Solomon got their scythes and their whetstones and started very early in the morning to the wheat-field. And they sharpened their scythes with the whetstones and swung the scythes back and forth and began to cut down the wheat. Every time the scythe swung, it cut through the stalks of wheat and they fell down on the ground. And they walked along over the field, swinging the scythes, and cutting down the wheat, until all the wheat was cut. Then they went home and left it lying there in the sun.

The next morning Uncle John got out the oxen and they put their heads down low, and he put the yoke over and the bows under and hooked the tongue of the cart to the yoke and said "Gee up there." And the old oxen walked slowly along, past the barn and past the orchard to the wheat-field.

And the sun had dried the stalks of wheat and the tassels. The tassels are a lot of little cases, on a fine stem; and in each little case is a grain of whole wheat. When the tassels are dry, the little cases are all ready to break open.

Then Uncle Solomon and Uncle John took their long forks and put the wheat in the cart, and when the cart was full the old oxen walked slowly back to the barn and in at the great doors.

There were great enormous doors in the side of the barn, big enough for a wagon to go through when it was piled up high with a load of hay or of wheat. And

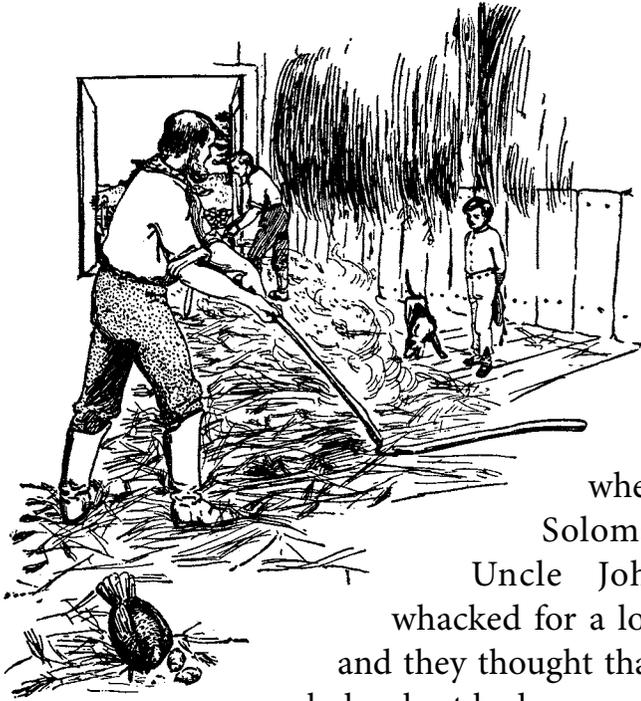
THE WHOLE WHEAT STORY

in the other side of the barn were other great enormous doors, so that the wagon could go right through the barn; and between the doors was only the great open floor with nothing on it. On one side of this open place were the cows, and on the other side were the horses and the oxen, and the cart went in between, with the wheat in it.

Then Uncle Solomon and Uncle John took the wheat out of the cart and put it on the floor of the barn; and the old oxen started again and walked out the other door and back to the wheat-field. Then Uncle Solomon and Uncle John filled the cart again and the oxen dragged that wheat to the barn; and they did the same way until all the wheat was on the barn floor. Then Uncle John took off the yoke and the old oxen went to their places and went to sleep.

The next morning Uncle Solomon and Uncle John went to the barn, and each took down from a nail a long smooth stick that had another smooth stick fastened to its end by a piece of leather so that it flapped about. This was to beat the wheat with, and they called it a flail.

And so Uncle Solomon and Uncle John stood amidst the wheat on the barn floor and whacked it with the flails so that they made a great noise—whack! whack!—on the floor. And the little cases broke open and the grains of whole wheat fell out and dropped between the stalks to the barn floor. And the pieces of the broken cases blew out from the great barn doors; for the doors were open at both sides and the wind blew through. These broken pieces that blow away, they call chaff.



Then when Uncle Solomon and Uncle John had whacked for a long time, and they thought that all the whole wheat had come out of the cases, they hung up the flails and took their long forks and lifted up the stalks of the wheat and shook them so that all the grains of wheat might drop through; and they put the dried stalks of the wheat in a corner of the hay-loft above where the cows slept.

These dried stalks they call straw, and they put it for the horses and the cows and the oxen to sleep on.

And when the straw was all put away, there was all the wheat on the floor; and they gathered it up and put it into bags. And they had enough to make whole wheat flour to last all winter, and to feed the chickens and every kind of a thing that they wanted to use wheat for, and there was enough to take some to market besides.

And that's all.

CHAPTER V

THE STUMP STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a farm-house, and it was painted white and had green blinds. And when this farm-house was just built, before it was Uncle Solomon's, the man that lived there wanted some fields where he could plant his corn and his potatoes and his wheat. But the places where the fields would be were all covered with trees.

So in the winter when the snow was on the ground, he went out and cut down the trees with his axe. And the great big trees he carried to the mill, and they were sawed up into boards; that is another story. And the branches and the small trees he chopped up with his axe to burn in the fireplaces. Then the field was all covered with the stumps of the trees and with great rocks.

Then, when it began to get warm, after the winter was over, the man got out the old oxen. There were two pairs of oxen, and they came out of the barn and put down their heads, and the man put the yokes over

THE SANDMAN: HIS FARM STORIES

their necks and the bows up under, and he hooked great chains to the yokes. And he hooked one chain to the drag, and took his whip and said: "Gee up there, Buck; gee up there, Star." And the old oxen began walking slowly along to the field.



Then the man unhooked the drag, and fastened one of the chains to a stump, and hooked the other chain to that chain, and said: "Gee up there." And all the oxen began to pull as hard as they could, and all of a sudden out came the stump with a lot of dirt. And he pulled out all the stumps the same way, and stood them up at the back of the field, where they made a kind of a fence with the roots sticking slanting up into the air.

Then there were the big rocks all over the field. And the man fastened the chains to a rock and the old oxen pulled as hard as they could, and out came the rock and they put it on the drag. And then the man saw where he wanted his fence; and they dug a trench and put flat rocks on the bottom and then the biggest rocks they had on the flat rocks. And they pulled all the rocks out of the ground with the chains, and put them on the drag, and the old oxen pulled them over to the trench, and the man piled them up and built a wall.

THE STUMP STORY



Building the wall took a long time—a good many days. And when the oxen had pulled all the rocks out of the ground and dragged them over to the wall, the field was all soft and ready to be ploughed. So the oxen started walking along, out of the field, along the road, dragging the drag. And they went in at the big gate and up past the kitchen door to the barn. Then the man unhooked the chains and took off the yokes and the oxen went into the barn and went to sleep.

And that's all.