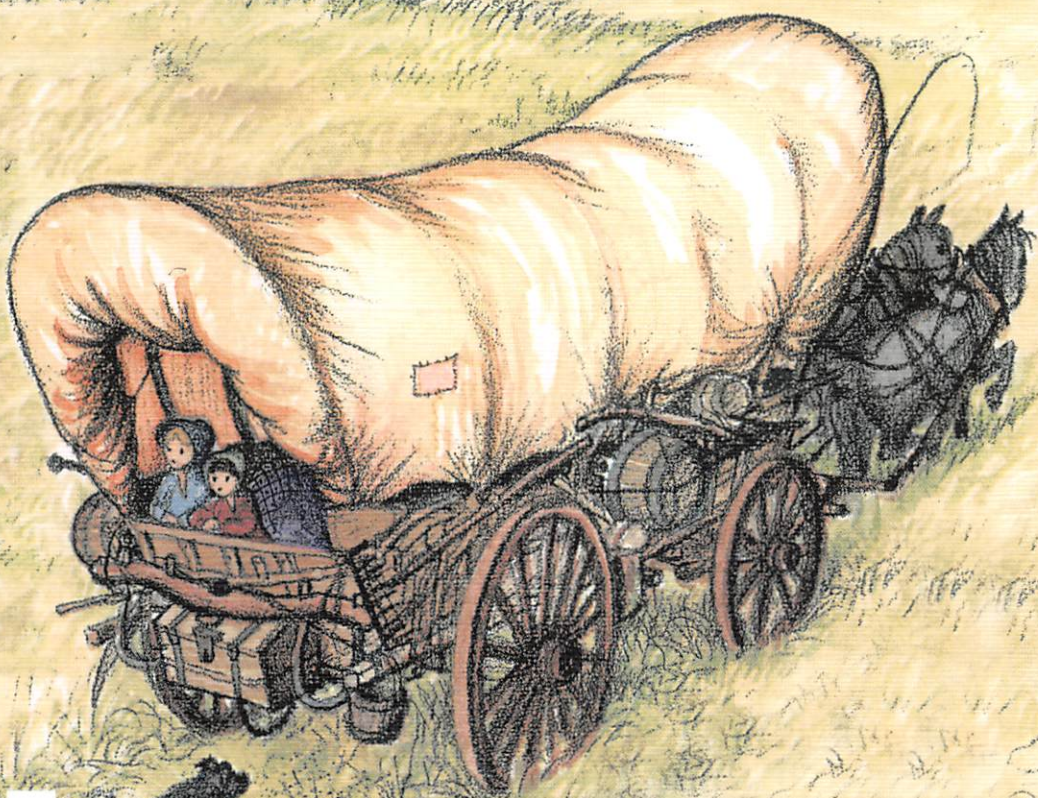
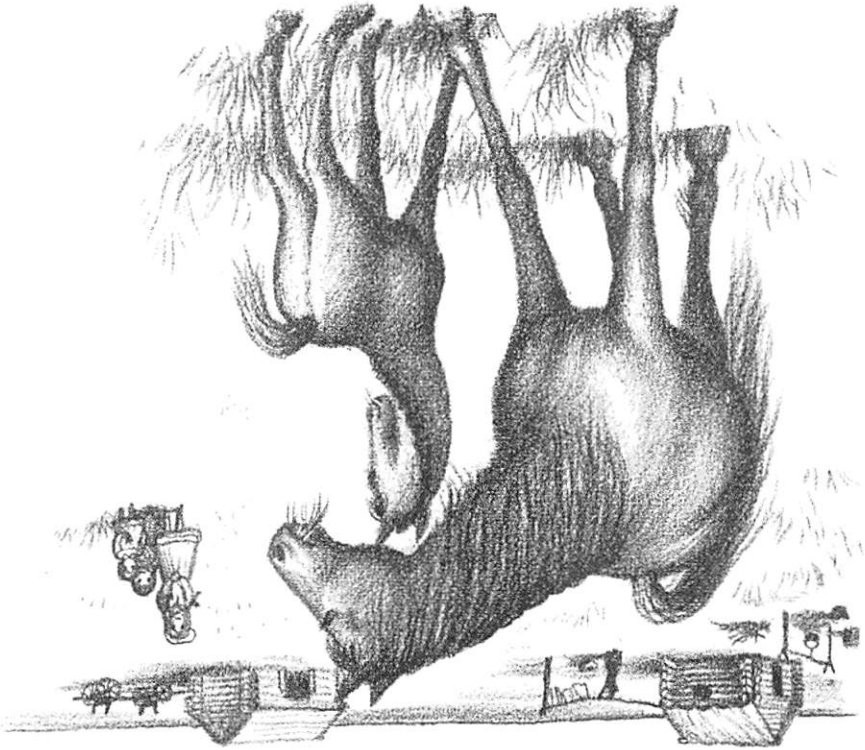


Laura Ingalls Wilder



**Little House
on the Prairie**

*Original text first published in 1935.
Revised edition, illustrated by Garth Williams, published in 1953.
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CHAPTER 2

CROSSING THE CREEK

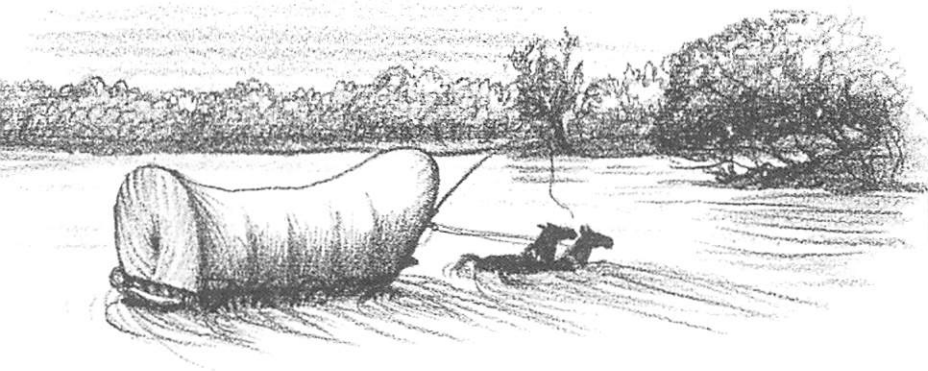
When Pet and Patty stopped to drink from the creek, the rushing sound of the water filled the air. "This creek's pretty high," Pa said. "But I guess we can make it all right. You can see this is a ford."

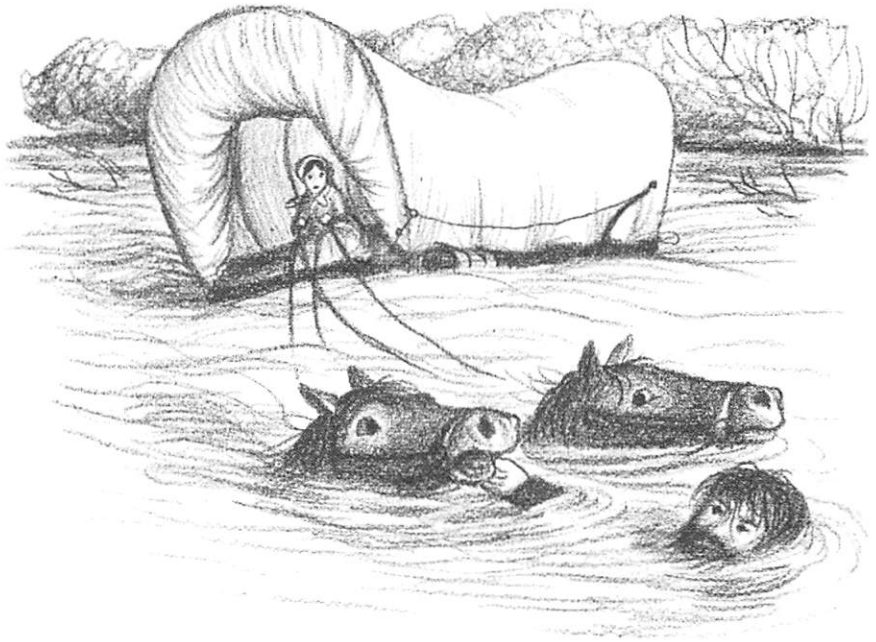
Pet and Patty lifted their wet noses, looking at the creek.

"I'll tie down the wagon-cover," Pa said. He climbed down from the seat, and tied the sides of the cover firmly to the wagon-box. Then he pulled the rope at the back, leaving only a tiny hole, too small to see through. 5

Mary sat on the bed. She did not like fords; she was afraid of the rushing water. But Laura was excited; she liked the splashing. Pa climbed to the seat, saying, "They may have to swim in the middle. But we'll make it all right, Caroline." 10

The wagon went forward softly in mud. Water began to splash





against the wheels. The splashing grew louder. The wagon shook as the noisy water struck at it. Then all at once the wagon lifted and balanced and swayed. It was a lovely feeling.

The noise stopped, and Ma said, sharply, "Lie down, girls!"

5 Mary and Laura dropped flat on the bed. When Ma spoke like that, they did as they were told. Ma's arm pulled a blanket over their heads. "Be still. Don't move!" she said.

Mary was trembling and still. But Laura wanted to see what was happening. She could feel the wagon turning; the splashing was noisy again, and again it died away. Then Pa's voice frightened Laura. It said, 10 "Take them, Caroline!" There was a sudden heavy splash beside the wagon. Laura sat up and pulled the blanket from her head.

Pa was gone. Ma sat alone, holding the reins with both hands. Mary hid her face in the blanket, but Laura stood up. She couldn't see the 15 creek bank. She couldn't see anything in front of the wagon but water. And in the water, three heads: Pet's head and Patty's head and Pa's small, wet head. Pa's fist in the water was holding tight to Pet's bridle.

CHAPTER 4

MOVING IN

“The walls are up,” Pa said to Ma in the morning. “We’d better move in without a floor. I must build the stable as fast as I can, so Pet and Patty can be inside walls, too.”

“Girls, eat your breakfasts quickly,” Ma said. “We’re moving into the house today.”

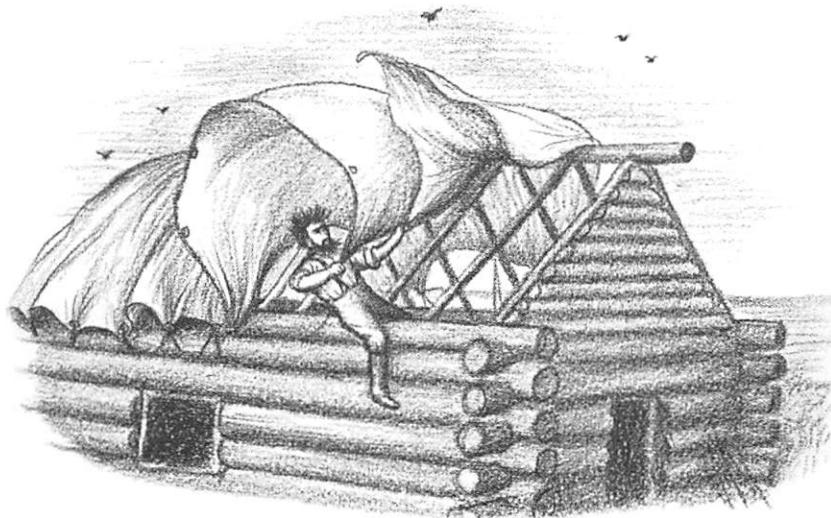
5

Ma swept the earthen floor, and then Mary and Laura began to help her carry things into the house.

Pa was on top of the walls, stretching the canvas wagon-top over the skeleton roof. His beard blew wildly in the wind, and he held onto the canvas and fought it. Once it jerked so hard that Laura thought he must fly into the air. But he held tight with his legs and tied the canvas down.

10

Pa came down the corner of the house. The ends of the logs stuck out, and he used them for a ladder. He ran his hand through his hair



so that it stood up wildly, and Ma burst out laughing. Then they looked at the house and Pa said, "How's that?"

"I'll be thankful to get into it," said Ma.

5 There was no door and there were no windows. There was no floor except the ground and no roof except the canvas.

By dinner-time the house was in order. The beds were neatly made on the floor. The wagon-seat and two logs were brought in for chairs. Pa's gun lay on its pegs above the doorway. Boxes and bundles were neat against the walls. It was a pleasant house.

10 Only the camp fire stayed where it had been. Pa would build a fire-place in the house as soon as he could. He would make a solid roof, too, before winter came. But that must wait until he had helped Mr. Edwards and built a stable for Pet and Patty.

"When that's all done," said Ma, "I want a clothes-line."

15 Pa laughed. "Yes, and I want a well."

CHAPTER 5

FRESH WATER TO DRINK

Now Pa had to dig a well, and then make a trip to town. He must dig the well first, so that Ma could have water while he was gone.

20 Next morning he marked a large circle in the grass near the house. With his spade he cut the grass inside the circle, and lifted it up in large pieces. Then he began digging himself deeper and deeper down.

At last the spade flew up and fell in the grass. Then Pa jumped. His hands came up, then one elbow, and then the other elbow, and Pa came rolling out.

25 He had to have help, now. Mr. Scott would help him dig this well, and then he would help dig Mr. Scott's well.

Mr. Scott came next morning. He was short and stout. His hair was bleached by the sun and his skin was bright red. Every morning Laura ran out to watch Mr. Scott and Pa working at the well.

CHAPTER 6

TEXAS LONGHORNS

One evening Laura and Pa were sitting on the doorstep. The moon shone, and softly Pa played his fiddle. Then Laura heard a distant sound. "What's that?" she said.

Pa listened. "Cattle!" he said. "Going north to Fort Dodge."

"Is that singing, Pa?" Laura asked.

5

"Yes," Pa said. "The cowboys are singing the cattle to sleep."

Next morning when she ran out of the house two strange men were sitting on horses by the stable. They were talking to Pa. They wore wide-brimmed hats, and pistols were on their hips.

They said, "So long" to Pa, and "Hi! Yip!" to their horses, and they galloped away. "Here's a piece of luck!" Pa said to Ma. Those men were cowboys. They wanted Pa to help them keep the cattle together in the creek bottoms.

10

Pa tied his biggest handkerchief around his mouth and nose to keep the dust out. Then he rode Patty west.

15

All day the hot winds blew, and at noon dust was blowing along the horizon. Ma said that so many cattle stirred up dust from the prairie. Pa came riding home at sunset, covered with dust. There was dust in his beard and in his hair, and dust fell off his clothes. The cattle were not across the creek yet. They went very slowly, eating grass as they went. They had to eat enough grass to be fat when they came to the cities.

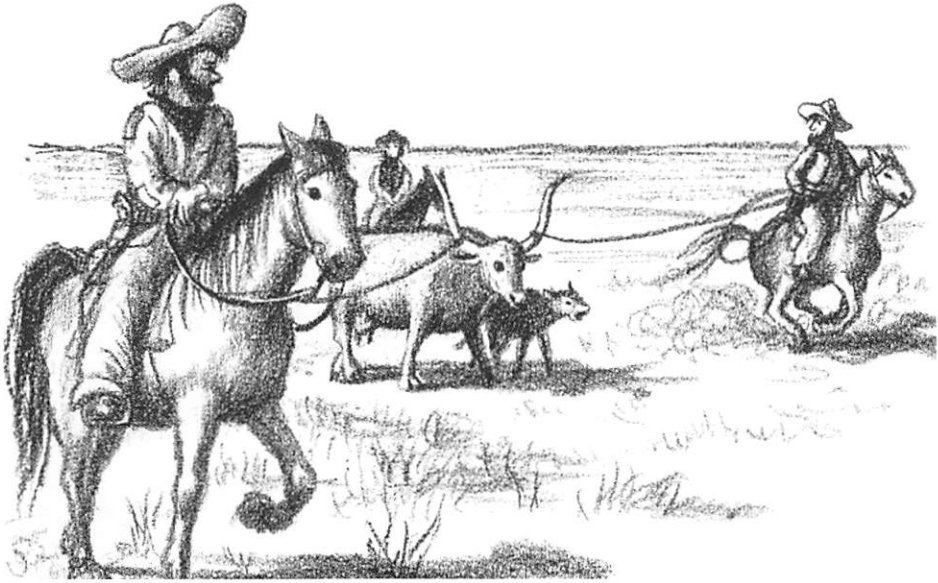
20

That night, Pa went to bed soon after supper. The night was dark, and the cowboys began to sing. Their songs were high, lonely songs, almost like the howling of wolves.

25

All next day Laura and Mary could hear the cattle, and see dust blowing. Suddenly a dozen long-horned cattle burst out of the prairie, not far from the stable. A cowboy on a mustang galloped to get in front of them. He waved his big hat and yelled, "Hi! Yi-yi-yi! Hi!" The cattle ran away, and behind them the mustang galloped.

30



Laura ran back and forth, yelling, “Hi! Yi-yi-yi!” till Ma told her to stop. She wished she could be a cowboy.

Late that afternoon three riders came out of the west, driving one cow. One of the riders was Pa. With the cow was a little calf. Two ropes
5 around the cow’s long horns were fastened to the cowboys’ saddles.

Ma watched from the window, while Mary and Laura stood and stared. The cowboys held the cow with their ropes while Pa tied her to the stable. Then they said goodbye and rode away.

The calf was too small to travel, Pa said, and the cow was too thin,
10 so the cowboys had given them to Pa. They had given him beef, too.

Pa took a bucket, and he sat by the cow to milk her. And that cow kicked Pa flat on his back.

Pa jumped up, his face red.

He pushed the cow against the stable and drove two posts into the
15 ground beside her so she could not move.

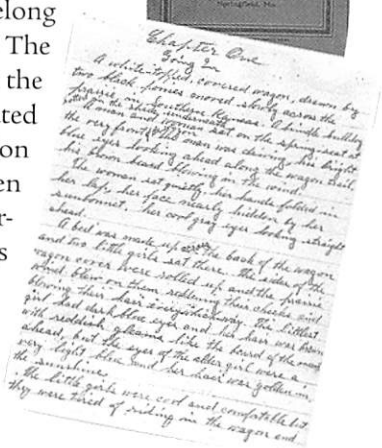
Would You Like to Know ...

... WHAT BOOKS LAURA WROTE?

Laura's books describe her childhood, from the age of five until she married at 18. *Little House in the Big Woods* (1932) is the first of the series. The others are *Farmer Boy* (1933), *Little House on the Prairie* (1935), *On the Banks of Plum Creek* (1937), *By the Shores of Silver Lake* (1939), *The Long Winter* (1940), *Little Town on the Prairie* (1941) and *Those Happy Golden Years* (1943).

... HOW LAURA CAME TO WRITE HER BOOKS?

Laura's books are based on her life story, but she did change some facts when she felt it made for easier reading. Her books are historical fiction, not autobiography. As a child, her daughter Rose had constantly begged her mother for stories of Laura's pioneer childhood. Rose became a journalist and writer, and finally persuaded her mother to write down her childhood memories. She became Laura's editor and in some ways her teacher. The first book was published when Laura was 65 years old, and she finished the last when she was 76! Laura wrote using blocks of writing paper for schoolchildren, but also the backs of old envelopes and letters. Often she made six or seven drafts before the final version. The *Little House* books were a huge success and belong to the classics of American literature. The series has sold over 42 million copies in the United States alone and been translated into more than 40 languages. A television series ran for nine years and has been repeated countless times. In the TV version, however, quite a number of things are different from Laura's stories ...



An early draft of Chapter 1, written on one of the school writing blocks that Laura used. The original chapter title was "Going in," to parallel the final chapter, "Going out."

... MORE ABOUT LAURA'S LIFE AND STORIES?

Laura Elizabeth Ingalls was born on February 7th, 1867, in the Big Woods of Wisconsin, USA. A year later, Pa and Ma took baby Laura and her sister Mary, aged three, to Missouri. But the family didn't stay there long. Inspired by the government's offer of "free land" to settlers, Pa took his family to the prairies of Kansas. But after working hard and planting crops, the Ingalls were forced to leave. The family went back to their old home in Wisconsin, staying until 1874, when Laura was seven. This is described in Laura's first story. *Little House on the Prairie* covers the journey to Kansas, and the year the family spent there.

On the Banks of Plum Creek follows the family back to Minnesota, where Pa's crops are destroyed by grasshoppers. *By the Shores of Silver Lake* has the family moving to Dakota Territory. Mary is now blind through illness, and Pa earns his living at a railway camp. *The Long Winter* begins



with a snowstorm that cuts off the little town where the Ingalls family now lives. It is a gripping story of their seven months in the snow without supplies, burning hay to keep warm and eating wheat ground in a coffee-mill.

In *Little Town on the Prairie* Laura, now a teenager, finishes school and meets her future husband, Almanzo Wilder, whose childhood is described in *Farmer Boy*. *Those Happy Golden Years* ends the series, telling of Laura's time as a teacher in a prairie school and the beginning of her marriage.

Laura and Pa, taken from a family photo. Laura was fifteen at the time.

apartment (<i>Amer.</i>) / flat (<i>Brit.</i>)	She lives in a small <i>apartment</i> . Our house has six <i>flats</i> in it.	Wohnung
roof	You find this on top of a house.	Dach
wall	the side of a house	Mauer; Wand
floor	the part of the room you walk on	Fußboden
to sweep, swept, swept	In autumn we <i>sweep</i> up the leaves in the garden.	fegen
window	<i>Windows</i> usually have glass in them.	Fenster
front door	You go into a house through the <i>front door</i> .	Haustür; Wohnungstür
fireplace	<i>place</i> in a room where you can have a <i>fire</i>	Kamin
stairs	Jerry ran up the <i>stairs</i> .	Treppe
kitchen	room where you cook food	Küche
living room	Here you can relax and watch TV.	Wohnzimmer
hall	where you come into the house	Flur
bedroom	room for sleeping	Schlafzimmer
bathroom	Here you can have a bath or shower. In America <i>bathroom</i> is also the word for 'toilet.'	Badezimmer; Toilette (<i>Amer.</i>)
space	This big house has lots of <i>space</i> for our stuff.	Platz; Raum
seat	place to sit	Sitz
blanket	cover that keeps us warm in bed	Decke; Bettdecke
stable	house for a horse	Pferdestall
> THE WAGON (20)		
wagon	cart on four wheels, which a horse or an ox pulls	Wagen
covered wagon	<i>wagon</i> with a 'roof' made of cloth	Planwagen
wheel	A wagon has four <i>wheels</i> .	Rad
wagon-box	part of the <i>wagon</i> which things are carried in	Wagenkasten
skeleton wagon	frame (= <i>Rahmen</i>) of the <i>wagon</i>	Wagengestell
wagon-cover	material over the <i>wagon</i> to keep out rain etc.	Wagenplane
wagon-top	material over the <i>wagon</i> to keep out rain etc.	Wagenplane
canvas	strong cloth used for sails	Segeltuch
wagon-seat	where you sit to drive the <i>wagon</i>	Wagensitz
to load	to put things into a car, lorry etc.	laden; beladen
to unload	<i>opp.</i> to load	ausladen

to pack pile	<i>Pack</i> the bags! They <i>packed</i> the car. a lot of things, one on top of the other	packen; beladen Stapel; Haufen
to pile	to put things on top of one another	aufhäufen; stapeln
horse	big animal that can carry people, pull wagons etc.	Pferd
bridle	harness for a horse's head	Zaum; Zügel
reins	With the <i>reins</i> the rider tells the horse which way to go.	Zügel
to hitch to	to fasten to	vor ... spannen
to hitch	to fasten	anspannen
to unhitch	to take a horse out of its harness	ausspannen
> THE FARM (12)		
ground	the earth we walk on	Boden
earth	Plants grow in the <i>earth</i> .	Erde
field	piece of land used for farming	Feld
cornfield	<i>field</i> where <i>corn</i> grows	Maisfeld
furrow	long cut in the earth, made by a plow (= <i>Pflug</i>)	Furche
dust	dry dirt, like a fine powder	Staub
mud	soft wet earth	Schlamm
muddy	covered with wet earth	schlammig
plow	With this, the farmer cuts and turns over the earth.	Pflug
to plow	The farmer <i>plowed</i> the field before he planted his corn.	pflügen
to plant	Look — I've <i>planted</i> some roses!	pflanzen; bepflanzen
roots	parts of a plant which are under the earth	Wurzel
rock	big stone	(großer) Stein; Fels
> TOOLS & OTHER SUCH THINGS (10)		
axe	With an <i>axe</i> you can cut wood.	Axt
to chop	You <i>chop</i> wood with an axe.	hacken
to cut, cut, cut	With a knife you can <i>cut</i> bread.	schneiden
spade	You can dig with a <i>spade</i> .	Spaten
to dig, dug, dug	You must <i>dig</i> the garden before you can plant flowers.	graben
to shovel	to move earth etc. with a <i>shovel</i>	schaufeln
cover	s.th. that you put over another thing	Deckel

5. Pa *took* Laura to the well that afternoon.
6. He *lighted* the end of a string.
7. He *dropped* a little bundle into the well.
8. They *heard* a muffled 'bang!'
9. Smoke *came* out of the well.
10. They always *sent* the candle down now.

EXERCISE 62 – MAKE SENTENCES (PAGES 16–20)

Make up at least one sentence for each of the following words or expressions. You can stay close to the text or invent your own: not too long, but also not too short. The sentences can be as serious or amusing as you like, but not embarrassing!

1. ... had to ...
2. Next morning ...
3. Then he began ...
4. Before he went ...
5. That afternoon ...
6. ... went on ----ing ...
7. But they always ...
8. One day when ...
9. ... almost full of ...
10. And now, when ...

EXERCISE 63 – PUT INTO THE PRESENT TENSE (PAGES 19–20)

Example: Mr. Scott went home. ⇔ Mr. Scott goes home.

1. You *were* right about that candle.
2. He sometimes *made* a mistake.
3. Pa *put* some gunpowder in a piece of cloth.
4. He *took* Laura with him to the well.
5. He *lighted* the string and *dropped* the bundle into the well. (Two verbs!)
6. In a minute there *was* a 'bang!' and smoke *came* up. (Two verbs!)
7. Now the two men always *sent* the candle down first.
8. One day, when Pa *was* digging, water *came* pouring in. (Two verbs!)
9. Mr. Scott *wound* up the bucket, full of water.
10. Now they *could* always have fresh water from the well.

EXERCISE 64 – DOLMETSCHEN (PAGES 18–19)

Folgende Sätze sind alle im Text zu finden. Manchmal musst du aber ein paar Wörter weglassen oder hinzufügen!

1. Laura kam mit dem Wasser zurückgeeilt.
2. Pa und Ma waren beide dabei, die Seilwinde zu drehen.

3. Pa zerrte Mr. Scott auf das Gras und horchte an seinem Brustkorb.
4. "Ich will keinen Brunnen. Ich will nicht, dass du solche Risiken eingehst!"
5. Pa war in das Gas hinuntergestiegen, um Mr. Scott zu helfen.
6. Mr. Scott dachte, dass die Kerze Unsinn sei.
7. Das war sein Fehler.

EXTRASÄTZE FÜR FORTGESCHRITTENE!

8. *An jenem Nachmittag wollte Pa Laura etwas zeigen. (* Dieses Wort auslassen!)
9. Pa zündete das Gas im Brunnen mit Schießpulver an.

EXERCISE 65 – VOCABULARY (PAGES 18–20)

Find the answers in the 'Vocabulary Page by Page' section, looking in the middle column.

1. With a knife you can bread.
2. What is another way of saying *I must*?
3. What is a word meaning *to come to the end of life on earth*?
4. What do we call the *part of a thing that you hold on to*?
5. What is a word which means *to make fast or to bind*?
6. What do we call *something you do or say wrongly*?
7. What is a word meaning *to make something burn*?
8. What is a word which means *to let (oneself or something) fall*?
9. What is a word meaning *to go up (a hill, a tree, etc.)*?
10. What is another way of saying *to want a drink*?

EXERCISE 66 – DID YOU UNDERSTAND THE CHAPTER? (PAGES 16–20)

1. Where did the family get water before Pa dug the well?
2. Why couldn't Ma fetch water while Pa was away in town? (*Hint: the wagon ...*)
3. Pa began the well alone. Why did he need help after a while?
4. Do you remember Mr. Edwards in Chapter 3? He was pretty different from Mr. Scott here! Can you mention a few points?
5. Why did the two men need the windlass?
6. Why did Pa check the well every morning with the candle?
7. Why did Mr. Scott not check, the morning that he came early?
8. Why did Ma say, "*Charles, you can't. You mustn't*" (18,9)?
9. "*Somehow he got to the ground and sat there*" (18,20). What is Laura telling us here, indirectly?
10. Why does Ma start crying and sobbing (18,27)?

EXERCISE 67 – RETELLING THE STORY (PAGES 17–18)

1. Digging the well: Part 1 – Before the accident (17,1–11).
2. Digging the well: Part 2 – The accident (17,12–18,15)
3. Digging the well: Part 3 – Pa brings Mr. Scott up (18,16–19,3)