

nothing, but John dozed off thinking about school. Winona kept on reading. She laid the book on her stomach after the last sentence — "And the rabbit thought he had killed his bride, and he went away very sad." She pulled the cover up around Ernest, and she slid down under the patchwork quilt until only a little pigtail showed on the pillow. The book fell to the floor, but she didn't hear it go "thump." A large white rabbit sat in her rocking chair in the corner of her bedroom. She heard the squeaking of the rocker back and forth, back and forth, and she peeked just one eye at the corner of her room. "Come on, Winona Moore, and be my bride. Take your overshoes — it is snowing out." "I can't be your bride; I am only 12 years old." "That is fine with me." "No, I think not, Rabbit," she said. The rabbit rose from the rocker and stood up. He towered into the air quite a way up. Winona smiled and looked up at him. "If you don't, the snow will never stop." "Oh, all right." "Sit on my tail, and I will take you to my rabbit hutch." "Just so I don't have to eat cabbage." "Mostly oatmeal cookies up here." The rabbit knew the daily cuisine was ground, chopped, squeezed, and powdered cabbage, but earth girls like oatmeal cookies.

The rabbit left and let Winona down by the Newcastle gate. Signs were all over — Hutch West, Hutch East. All the houses looked alike. She tried to follow the road to Newcastle. "Winona, Winona, take me!" Ernest pulled on her nightgown. "Ok." Winona rubbed her eyes and climbed out of bed. She pulled on her long socks and boots. She dressed Ernest, put on his overcoat and pulled his stocking cap over his ears. "We can't get out; the door won't open. I should have married the rabbit. Now it will snow forever." "What?" Ernest looked up at his sister. "Oh nothing."

Winona kept the rabbit in the back of her mind when she turned the pages of her storybook. She remembered the story and the dream. Once in a while when she heard an unaccountable squeak, she would look at her rocking chair to see if the white rabbit occupied it.

Ernest Moore fiddled with the ink well sitting securely in a hole on the right side of his school desk. There wouldn't be ink in the well for a while, at least until after Christmas. It was September, 1919, and Christmas was a few months away. Ernest anticipated entering the second grade, but he wouldn't admit it. Putting on shoes and wearing pants without holes in the knees, and a new undented tin pail made the first week of school tolerable.

School in September of 1919 left most mothers with empty houses. Mrs. Moore sent three children to the halls of learning in Franklin, Washington: Ernest to the second grade, Alfred to the fourth, and Winona attended Black Diamond High School. John finished the eighth grade. He stayed home and helped with chores and fished with his dad in the Green River. "It's best

you not go, John," Alfred said, "Too much picking on one colored boy."

Ernest repeated the number facts, painted pictures, and sang the National Anthem. The weekend was fun, like being "let out." Running barefoot and wearing your oldest pants with only a string to hold them up was a relief from good school clothes.

Mama Annie packed the tin pails for the second week, one for the fishing trip, and the rest of the pails with choice sandwiches and oatmeal cookies. Apples were plentiful in Washington State, and there was a large red apple in each tin pail.

Several children were already chosen monitors in the schoolroom. They placed new yellow pencils in the grooves on the desks. Ernest sat down and played with his new pencil. He bit into it, putting his teeth marks right by the eraser. "Now no one can get my pencil — their teeth have to fit these marks." Sometimes the marks of ownership of pencils was completed with a pen knife, but if you didn't have one, teeth would be sufficient.

The first day of the third week started out with a cool Monday. Ernest stood on the end of his bed and pulled up his window shade. "Rain!" He tried to find his matching sock, and even checked Alfred's leg to see if he had it on. "Oh, well," he said, "My pants cover my socks." "Don't forget your jackets; weather doesn't look too good."

The noon lunch bell rang. As it wasn't raining the doors were opened to play outside. The second grade class lined up for their coats, but Ernest felt warm. He left his coat hanging on the hook, and he even unbuttoned his shirt. He didn't feel like eating or playing. Most of his lunch remained in the tin pail sitting in the clothes closet. By spelling time his throat felt tender, even when he swallowed. "Ernest Moore, stand up please and spell FATHER." Ernest had put his head on his arm; his sweater was soft and comfortable for his head. It had started hurting right after the arithmetic lesson. He didn't feel like sitting up straight. When there was no response from Ernest to stand and spell, Mrs. Marx put her chalk down and walked to the third row front desk. She placed her hand on his head. In a sympathetic voice she asked Ernest, "Why didn't you let me know you didn't feel good? Your mother shouldn't have sent you to school if you weren't feeling good." Her words were hardly audible; his head seemed to be somewhere else. "I was all right this morning." The walk to the principal's office was short — only down the hall and around the corner. It seemed a long way to go, and he wanted to lay down. He wished he had his own bed.

The principal made Ernest stay on a cot in the isolation room. It felt good to lay down, and he fell asleep. Voices were far away, then closer, and he sat trying to figure out where he was.